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Degree: Doctor of Philosophy

Year this Degree Granted: 2002

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

BUILDING COMMUNITY:

SENIOR COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS' PERSPECTIVES

by

ROLF J. BOON ©

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Educational Administration and Leadership

Department of Educational Policy Studies

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

Fall, 2002

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled *Building Community: Senior College Administrators' Perspectives* submitted by Rolf J. Boon, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Administration and Leadership.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my daughters RaeAnne and Aiden whose inquisitive minds and energy for discovery inspired me during the writing of this study. Also, I dedicate this work to my wife whose support, encouragement, and sacrifice, particularly during the times I needed it most, afforded me the opportunity to complete this research. And to my parents, who provided me a wonderful education in the fine arts and life, I extend my gratitude and admiration.

ABSTRACT

At a time when the focus of administration is on rationality and accountability, the purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the phenomenon of building community through a study of the beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions of five presidents in the Alberta College system; to disclose what they have learned and discover what we can learn from them about the phenomenon. I explored how the presidents viewed leadership and organizational behavior and I used the metaphor of building community as a means to elicit the leaders' adaptive strategies in response to changing government ideology and changing environmental conditions.

I reported the participants' leadership orientations, their organizational contexts, how they enacted leadership and influenced it in others, how they saw leadership as closely connected to change, and the meanings they placed on the metaphor of building community. Five leadership themes surfaced from the study. They were: speaking the organization, an enterprise orientation, political nuances, leadership transparency, and distributed leadership.

I found that these college presidents have embraced the importance of workforce development and employment training in direct response to economic conditions; thus changing their colleges' educational missions. They had also embraced the importance of partnering and developing external relationships to secure financial support and moral support. Colleges are now seen as enterprises and, by inference, college presidential leadership has changed. Leaders saw themselves as the principal agent for 'selling' education and training while at the same time endeavoring to find a balance between conflicting interests and competition for limited resources. In particular,

economic conditions, demographic contexts, organizational cultures, and personal leadership experiences influenced the adaptive strategies they employed.

In addition, the findings support and expand the literature on educational change, transformational-transactional leadership processes, building community, and the challenges within the community-college sector. Notably, they revealed that future pressures of access and new technologies would require additional commitments and resolve from government, and that there was a deepening concern for leadership succession.

Finally, Sergiovanni's community metaphor rang 'true' and was in keeping with the roles of Alberta College presidents and their attempts to respond to change initiated by government.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A study of this magnitude cannot be conducted and completed without the willing participation, direct involvement, and support of many people. Therefore, I would like to extend my profound appreciation to a number of individuals who contributed greatly to this work. In particular, to Dr. Margaret Haughey who has provided excellent counsel and assistance. I appreciated her intellect, gentle quality, and insightful guidance, especially during the periods of dissonance and uncertainty. Dr. Haughey has the outstanding ability to fertilize thinking while at the same time meet the need for student independence and self discovery. Her support made this undertaking both enjoyable and challenging. I would also like to extend my sincerest appreciation to the committee for their feedback, council, and their participation in this journey of discovery.

A special acknowledgement and thanks goes to the five Alberta College Presidents who so graciously allowed the researcher to enter and share their working lives for a brief period of time. Their patience and cooperation was much appreciated.

I am also especially grateful for the relationships that I established during my sabbatical at the University of Alberta. In particular, Dr. Art Gagne, Dr. Darlene Garnier, Dr. Dianne Millard, and Dr. Geoff Riordon.

I would also like to acknowledge the editorial work performed by Dr. Margaret Haughey, Dr. Jerry Petryshyn, and Sharon Uttaro on the dissertation. Similarly, I would like to thank Dr. Cambell Ross for editing the project proposal.

Last, I have always tried to thank the individuals that have helped shape this work as I proceeded. If, somehow, I have failed to acknowledge your voice, know that it is present, in some way, in this work. For this I thank you now.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The phenomenon of what it means to provide college leadership is in a continuous state of evolution as the contexts for educational organizations undergo transformation. This is most certainly true in Alberta where college administrations are challenged by a system which contends that rationality and accountability are the key measures of success. In this study I explored the beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions of college presidents engaged in building community during these challenging and evolutionary times. My research examined the perceptions of five practicing administrators and how they constructed their realities—realities that are multiple, subjective, and convincing. The study documents the sharing of these realities coupled with my reflections on and interpretations of their stories. I sought their understanding of building community through the meanings these leaders assigned to their actions. Finally, I explored the metaphorical contexts in which these leaders expressed their creative activity.

The approach employed in this study is that of the narrative where "lived experiences" and the concomitant interactions surrounding them are related. Goldberg (1986) presented a relevant narrative regarding the use of language and human interaction when she wrote:

> I see the dog—with this sentence structure, 'I' is the center of the universe. We forget in our language structure that while 'I' look at the dog,' 'the dog' is simultaneously looking at us. . . . There is an exchange or interaction rather than a subject acting on an object. (p. 62)

I believe the same interaction is present in research; I influenced my participants even as they influenced me. In this narrative context then, the role of the researcher is to enter the

worlds of others, engage in discourse, question, probe, reflect and, ultimately, to share their stories.

An important element of the narrative is the use of metaphor. Imagery is commonly employed in organizational contexts as a way of expressing and communicating immediate "feelings" and "positions" individuals may have on specific issues that are summative in their intent. This is in keeping with Glesne and Peshkin (1992) who noted that "in reflecting on the research process, postmodernists consciously choose new metaphors to describe their work. These metaphors have quickly become a part of the general qualitative language" (p. 11). Gareth Morgan in his *Images of Organization* (1986) further underscored the relevancy of using metaphorical language in organizational contexts:

> Metaphor is often just regarded as a device for embellishing discourse, but its significance is much greater than this. For the use of metaphor implies *a way of thinking* and *a way of seeing* that pervades how we understand our world generally . . . this kind of thinking has relevance for understanding organization and management. For organizations are complex and paradoxical phenomena that can be understood in many different ways. (pp. 12-13)

My metaphor for this research is "portraiture" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Hoffmann, 1997). Through the artistic process I adjusted my aperture, focus, depth of perception, and view, to render portraits of leaders and their organizational landscapes; the portraiture orientation is to find out how these worlds appear through the words of the participants. Together, from their conversations about themselves and their organizational landscapes, I produce a thematic portfolio containing a variety of new and different views on the changing role of college leadership.

Change as Context

Before commenting further on the perspectives and parameters of the study, it is important to provide a context, in this case, the rapid and revolutionary change that has in recent years dramatically affected organizations.

To be sure, social transformations have taken place throughout history; however, as Drucker (1994) stated, "no century in recorded history has experienced so many social transformations and such radical ones as the twentieth century" (p. 53). Specifically, in his research on organizational transformation, Kotter (1998) concluded that

> No organization today—large or small, local or global—is immune to change. To cope with new technological, competitive, and demographic forces, leaders in every sector have sought to fundamentally alter the way their organizations do business. These change efforts have paraded under many banners—total quality management, reengineering, restructuring, mergers and acquisitions, turnarounds. Yet according to most assessments, few of these efforts accomplish their goals. Fewer than 15 of the 100 or more companies I have studied have successfully transformed themselves. (p. 1)

Kanter (1999) underscored this and identified three major forces that have affected organizations: "globalization, information technology, and industry consolidation" (p. 2). My research, which explores the perceptions of five college presidents on leadership and building community, therefore, has been framed in the context of these three societal forces that are currently changing the way public organizations are being defined and reinvented.

Organizations are having to develop different visions as global citizens with new responsibilities in a highly complex and economically driven world. Covey (1996), who

has been a consultant for many major US corporations, for example, pointed out that in this environment

> The primary driving force of *organizational* change is the global economy. The standard of quality is now so high that unless you have an empowered work force and a spirit of partnership with all stakeholders, you can't compete, whether you work in the private sector, public sector, or social sector. (p. 156)

Kanter (1999) concurred, noting that

> in today's world, all organizations, from the Fortune 500 to the local nonprofit agency, need greater reach. They need to be in more places, to be more aware of regional and cultural differences, and to integrate into coherent strategies the work occurring in different markets and communities. (p. 2)

Centrally connected to globalization and economic growth, are the rapid changes that are taking place in the technology sector and the cyber-world. Easy access to on-line information, news, educational programs, and electronic communication has eliminated boundaries and transformed organizations into highly competitive micro cultures. Drucker (1999) acknowledged the impact of technology when he stated,

> The explosive emergence of the Internet as a major, perhaps eventually *the* major, worldwide distribution channel for goods, for services, and, surprisingly, for managerial and professional jobs [has] profoundly chang[ed] economies, markets, and industry structures; products and services and their flow; consumer segmentation, consumer values, and consumer behavior; jobs and labor markets. But the impact may be even greater on societies and politics and, above all, on the way we see the world and ourselves in it. (p. 1)

Globalization and technological transformation of society has and will continue to have a profound effect on organizational behavior. According to Bridges (1996),

> Everyone exclaims about the speed of change and we constantly repeat statistics about the percentage of the world's total knowledge that has been discovered since last Tuesday. All of that is true, but the relevant "changes" are those that force us to reconfigure the organization in order to profit from them or even to survive them. These changes are usually related to technological developments, and technology is central to them in three different ways:
>
> • It forces people to learn whole new ways of making things or of communicating with one another.
>
> • Those changes make possible, and even force other organizations to keep up with, rapid modifications in products and services.
>
> • Improved communication means that changes that once were visible only locally are now experienced everywhere at the same time. (p. 13)

These technological advancements coupled with an increase in public awareness and the amount of knowledge individuals possess continue to produce unprecedented change in our understanding of organizations and the individual's role within them. As a consequence, new and very different problems have been created. Drucker (1993) explained that

> in the developed free-market countries . . . work and work force, society and polity, are all, in the last decade of this century, qualitatively and quantitatively different not only from what they were in the first years of this century but also from what has existed at any other time in history: in their configurations, in their processes, in their problems, and in their structures. (p. 52)

Thus, in order for organizations to respond to new and different problems, they need to go beyond the known. As Rochfort (1994) pointed out:

> people will be called upon to exercise increasing degrees of flexibility in order to adapt to and negotiate the complex and constantly shifting structures and demands of the new modern internationalized information and communication based economies of the twenty-first century. (p. 2)

In such environments, according to Drucker (1996), "all institutions, including governments, churches, universities, and so on, will become more interdependent, more market and customer-driven" (p. 8). In the Alberta college system the focus will continue to be on competitiveness (inter-provincial, national, and international), accountability (defined by key performance indicators), responsiveness (flexibility in program delivery determined by market demands), and cost effectiveness (reduced dependency on government financial support). For example, the Alberta Minister of Advanced Education's *New Directions* (1994) document outlined the need for increased accessibility, improved responsiveness, greater affordability, and more accountability. This government publication "is a road map for meeting these growing and evolving needs through greater innovation, flexibility, and effectiveness" (p. 1), according to the then Minister of Advanced Education, Jack Ady.

As governments begin to reinvent and redesign public institutions, it becomes increasingly clear that organizations will need to look within themselves for member leadership to assist in developing a culture that is better able to respond to these changing conditions and build a collective vision. As Schein (1996) noted:

> The organizations that have survived and made important transitions over many decades seem to have always had a cultural core that was fundamentally functional—a commitment to learning and change; a commitment to people and to all of the stakeholders in the organization. . . . If such a cultural core does not exist from the beginning, the organization may not survive in the long run, especially as environmental turbulence increases. (p. 67)

Similarly, Naisbitt and Aburdene (1986) argued that "[an organization's] competitive edge is people—an educated, skilled work force that is eager to develop its

human potential while contributing to the organization's growth" (p. 139). They emphasized that "in the new information-rich, decentralized, global society, creativity will be increasingly valued in business. Creativity is the corporation's competitive edge. It is the special talent that discovers the right market niche" (p. 159). The importance of creativity and innovative thinking was affirmed by Rochfort (1994) in his discussion of the arts:

> [They] are disciplines that realize themselves not in what is, but what could be. They do not deal in certainties but in possibilities. For the new culture of the twenty-first century, they will represent a powerful symbol of precisely the kind of thinking that culture will need to engender if it is to continue, grow and thrive. (p. 2)

Finally, Basadur, a management professor at McMaster University and head of the Centre for Research in Applied Creativity, noted that

> Global competition is so fierce that companies must learn new ways [of doing things]. A smart business will bring creative learning to all levels of its operation. . . . We've learned to get on a moving train. Now we have to get on an accelerating train. (cited in Iwata and Howes, 1995, p. E1)

Arguments about creativity and the need to embrace change are very much at the forefront of organizational thinking. Bridges and Mitchell (2000) noted that

> The companies that survive longest are the ones that work out what they uniquely can give to the world—not just growth or money but their excellence, their respect for others, or their ability to make people happy. Some call those things a soul. (p. 5)

Similarly, Bolman and Deal (2000) also predict that "culture and core values will be increasingly recognized as the vital social glue that infuses an organization with passion and purpose. Workers will increasingly demand more than a paycheck. They'll want to

know the higher calling or enabling purpose of their work" (cited in Fullan, 2001b, p. 28).

The theme of change raises a number of intriguing questions: How are post-secondary institutions, particularly colleges in Alberta, responding to societal transformation? How are they utilizing their leadership resources? How are leaders preparing themselves and their members for this acceleration? How does one lead under such complex and dynamic conditions? What are the attributes to which organizations should subscribe to ensure success? How has leadership changed?

These are not easy questions to answer but they inform the focus of my research. This study explores how college presidents are responding to these changes and how they are choosing to lead in these difficult times.

How I Came to the Question

Garten (2001) believed that leaders are not fully aware of "the rise of global problems that will affect their firms and the environment in which they operate. They are failing to see the gap between society's expectations of what they should do and what they seem prepared to do" (p. 192). Part of the problem, according to Readings (1998), is knowing how to respond to these societal forces; "change comes neither from within nor from without, but from the difficult space where one is" (p. 6). In other words, the context in which leadership takes place plays a vital role.

The validity of the above statements are supported by my personal experiences in the college system. In particular, it was my two-year experience on a college Board of Governors that brought the issue of leadership to the fore.

During my tenure as the only professional educator on a public board of governors of a post-secondary institution, I was concerned and disillusioned by the fact that the central theme guiding much of the decision-making was fiscal constraint with a focus on "getting the financial house in order." Little was said about the quality of education, the students, or the overall morale and well-being of faculty. It was essentially a matter of the "bottom line" and the purpose was to endure some "blood letting" to ensure that the future of the organization would be viable and sustainable. As a result, the organization was downsized, while faculty and staff morale was adversely affected. In recent discussions, with the same public board members, I was comforted by the fact that their discussions are now centered on building a vision, finding purpose, improving morale, developing program excellence, and student centeredness. Arguably, the cost-cutting approach may or may not have needed to be taken. Nevertheless, apposite questions remain: How does one begin to re-establish trust, build morale, and develop a new direction and vision after a difficult and painful period of realignment? How does one begin to engender the concept of a strong sense of community after a tumultuous period such as this?

Clearly, there are numerous questions that could be explored concerning a highly visible metamorphosis such as this. This dissertation focused on the ways leaders mobilized organizations to adapt and respond to change; in particular, I examined the metaphor of building community: both internally and externally. It is my belief that this phenomenon will be increasingly valued by organizations facing changes in organizational culture brought about by government policy directives. In the study I examined the processes of developing a sense of community as a means of sharing and

assisting organizations with coping, adjusting, and implementing change. The impetus for this investigation was voiced in the metaphor by John Huey (cited in Blank, 1995) when he wrote, "a paradigm shift is like a boat, you don't want to miss it" (p. 26), or as Barker (1992) argued, "individuals or organizations must change their paradigms in order to explore new possibilities and contribute to growth, at both the individual and organizational levels" (Lilyquist, 1998, p. 12). In other words, organizations may need to look at market factors, private sector styles of management, decentralized leadership, responsiveness to community needs, and new means for measuring success.

In preparation for this study, and in particular to understand the conceptual underpinnings of the focus of this research, I have read, analyzed, and reflected on a broad range of literature that encompasses organizational behavior, leadership, and creativity. I have also observed, participated in organizational governance, and engaged in reflection of my own leadership experiences and perceptions of the topic. Such an approached is reaffirmed by Marshall and Rossman (1995) who maintained that "initial questions for research often come from real-world observations, dilemmas, and questions and have emerged from the interplay of the researcher's direct experience, tacit theories, and growing scholarly interests" (p. 16).

Purpose

In this study I explored college leadership in these difficult and challenging times when the focus of administration in Alberta colleges is on rationality and accountability. I sought to illuminate the creative responses of leaders who used community building as a leadership response to changing government policies and directives. My purpose was to

disclose what the five Presidents in the Alberta College system have learned and what we can learn from them about leadership at a time when colleges were undergoing substantial and highly complex transformations.

The Specific Research Questions

The primary question that I explored was broad and open-ended: What are the experiences and perceptions of post-secondary leaders who embrace change and engage in building community with others? Under its rubric, more specific research questions guided the discussions. They were as follows:

1. What is the process for actualizing an organization's vision? Does a vision undergo a metamorphosis over time? If so, how are new ideas incorporated into the process? Who are silent in the process?
2. How is "building community" defined by leaders? What is the role of the president in building a sense of community?
3. What does the relationship between leadership and followership look like? How does one identify and encourage internal leadership?
4. How does one bridge the gap between those that embrace change and those that fear it?
5. What experiences have been successful and which ones have been disappointments? Are there strategies, processes, actions, and situations which might increase the frequency of success? Is there a best response scenario or are the challenges within so unique as to exclude any common measure? Is there a

combination of processes that lead to more effective results? If so, how are these processes articulated and sustained?

6. What internal and external factors affect the process?

In summary, the central purpose of this study was to reveal the perceptions and actions of leaders engaged in building community with others. More specifically, the study explored the meanings the participants placed on the questions raised.

Need for the Study

There has been a substantial amount of quantitative and qualitative research conducted on the subject of leadership. Indeed, "investigators have examined about fifty facets of administrative behavior, yet despite these numerous resources, leadership remains difficult to discuss objectively because it is difficult to define" (Boyan, 1988, p. 77). Sergiovanni (1992) argued that the topic of leadership "represents one of social science's greatest disappointments [and] after fifty years of steady work, social science can tell us very little about the subject" (p. 2). Church and Waclawski (1998) agreed that "despite the large number of studies that have been done. . . much more research is needed that can tease out the differences inherent in the transformational-transactional leadership paradigm" (p. 3).

Much of the writing (e.g., Blanchard, Hybels, & Hodges, 1999; Blank, 1995; Covey, 1999; Handy, 1996; Pinchot, 1996; Schein, 1996; Senge, 1996) on leadership has been done from the perspective of the private sector. That, however, does not preclude Bolman and Deal's (1994) observation that "leadership is contextual and it is important

for leaders to have a deep understanding of the cultures in which they are embedded" (p. 83). As Pinchot (1996) pointed out:

> Leaders create an environment in which leaders can emerge. They contribute inspiring descriptions of shared vision to align everyone's energies. They care for and protect their employees. They listen and do their best to accept the contributions and divergent ideas of employees as honest attempts to help. They give thanks for the gifts of ideas, courage, and self-appointed leadership that employees bring to the community. They discourage backbiting and politics. They do their best to treat each member of the organization as a spiritual equal worthy of respect. They share information so that everyone can see how the whole organization works and how it is doing. They publicly celebrate the community's successes. . . . Community is a phenomenon that occurs most easily when free people with some sense of equal worth join together voluntarily for a common enterprise. (pp. 27-28)

The generic literature provides us with generalities on the subject. The writings are idiosyncratic; they are based on speculation rather than research. They are exhortatory and value based but not experiential and descriptive enough to adequately support and contribute insights into the human practice of implementing these idealistic descriptions. It is the actualizing elements—the processes, activities, and means by which leaders build community—that this study attempts to uncover. In arguing for the discovery of new practices, Wheatley (1999) noted "the more we cling to past practices, the more we deepen the crisis and prevent solutions" (p. 4).

Significance of the Study

Marshall and Rossman (1995) indicated that the significance of a study lies in the contribution it makes to fundamental knowledge in "ways that are new, insightful, or creative. . . . [and] how the study will contribute to research traditions or foundational

literature in new ways" (p. 24). They further noted that a study's significance may be that of a "test" or "expansion" of what is found in the literature. This means that data collection "may be in a different setting, with a different group, and certainly at a different time" (p. 24-25).

Keeping these points in mind, this study is significant in three ways: First, much of the previous research on community has been conducted in schools or private organizations. In contrast, this study provides insights into the difficulties and successes of leadership in Alberta colleges. Second, the study identified concepts and ideas specifically related to building community, research that has not been conducted on Alberta colleges. Third, the study explored leadership and community in contemporary contexts driven by changing government initiatives.

The fundamental purpose of this thesis is the pursuit of knowledge. The ultimate application and appreciation of the findings of this study is the empowerment of its audience. The knowledge and information may change the way in which readers understand organizational behavior, leadership, and membership and, potentially, how they enact their own leadership.

Overview

Having outlined the study in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 proceeds with a synoptic literature review of the contemporary ideas and theories, both academic and populist that are relevant to this study, surrounding leadership, organizational behavior, and building community. Chapter 3 outlines the interpretive methodology chosen for this study; Chapter 4 describes the historical and contemporary information about community

colleges including a discussion on the issues and challenges specific to the sector, and Chapter 5 contains the findings and presents the leaders' individual portraits from the interview data. Chapter 6 presents the major themes identified and Ch. 7 provides a review, analysis of thematic data, reflections on the findings, and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Change is considered integral to leadership, thus I begin the review with an examination of the literature on educational change. This is followed by a reexamination of leadership as a role; specifically transformational-transactional leadership and involving others in leadership. As background to the major findings on educational change and leadership, I then present a discussion of the building community metaphor as a means of remaining with the notion of leadership as a role. The chapter closes with a criticism of the metaphor and a brief summary. Overall, the review provided the concepts, ideas, and language that I listened for throughout the interviews, and reflected on during the analysis process.

Theories on Educational Change

To begin the discussion on leadership and change, I draw on selected writings on educational change as represented in the work of Anderson (1993), Fullan (1991, 2001a, & 2001b), Lewin (1994), Milstein (1993), and Nelson and Quick (1994).

Fullan (2001a) suggested that "research findings on the change process should be used less as instruments of 'application' and more as means of helping practitioners and planners 'make sense' of planning, implementation strategies, and monitoring" (p. 49). He noted that "the research of the past 30 years . . . has shown that there are no hard-and-fast rules, but rather a set of suggestions or implications given the contingencies specific to local situations" (p. 49). Keeping this in mind, according to the Webster's Dictionary, change is "the act, process, or result of altering or modifying; a transformation or

transition from one state, condition, or phase to another", and in broader terms: "cause to be different." Nelson and Quick (1994) identified three levels of change: incremental change, involving small improvements or "fine-tuning"; strategic change or restructuring, involving a systematic approach or series of "steps over time"; and transformational change, involving "the organization's mission, culture, goals, structure, and leadership [which] may all change dramatically" (p. 554). In their definition, Nelson and Quick identified three key terms that are used repeatedly in the literature on change; improvement, restructuring, and transformation. While improvement may be at the core of change, Fullan (2000) argued that

> we are now ready to extend our thinking, because in a non-linear world it is easy to lose one's way, even if one is motivated by moral purpose. If we live in a culture of change—and we certainly do—to understand the change process is a vital quality of all leaders. (p. 29)

In his earlier writings, Fullan (1991) noted that "change is a process not an event" (p. 49) and he identified three broad phases in the change process:

> Phase I consists of the process that leads up to and includes a decision to adopt or proceed with a change. Phase II involves the first experiences of attempting to put an idea or reform into practice. Phase III refers to whether the change gets built in as an ongoing part of the system or disappears by way of a decision to discard or through attrition. (pp. 47-48)

What Fullan proposed in his description of the change process is a gradual movement from an old to a new system. This is in keeping with Anderson (1993) who suggested six stages to the change process: maintenance of the old system, awareness that the old system is not working, exploration of new approaches, transition when the new system becomes more attractive, emergence of new infrastructure to embrace the new

more desired system, and finally, the predominance of the new system leading to even more effective systems being explored (pp. 14-15).

The process of change would not occur unless there were motivating factors or forces for change. Lewin (1994) suggested that "change is motion" and motion requires force. He elaborated,

> [while] one force pushes toward preserving the status quo, another force pushes for change. When the two opposing forces are approximately equal, current behavior is maintained. For behavioral change to occur, the forces maintaining status quo must be overcome. This can be accomplished by increasing the forces for change, by weakening the forces for status quo, or by a combination of these actions. (p. 560)

Change then, requires a restructuring of systems and, according to Milstein (1993), "change means that restructuring is comprehensive: All aspects of the system, including mission, goals, structures, policies, roles, participation, and relationships" (p. 3).

Recently, Fullan (2001b) identified six guidelines that offer leaders "concrete and novel ways of thinking about the process of change" (p. 5). They are:

> (1) the goal is not to innovate the most; (2) it is not enough to have the best ideas; (3) appreciate early difficulties of trying something new – what I call the implementation dip; (4) redefine resistance as a potential positive force; (5) reculturing is the name of the game; (6) never a checklist, always complexity. (p. 5)

He also cautioned us that "a culture of change consists of great rapidity and nonlinearity on the one hand, and equally great potential for creative breakthroughs on the other. The paradox is that transformation would not be possible without accompanying messiness" (p. 31). Central to his theory of change are two key elements. First, he suggested that moral purpose is job one. Fullan offered, "in the past, if you asked

someone in a successful enterprise what caused the success, the answer was 'It's the people'" (p. 51). Second, he argued that "it is actually the *relationships* that make the difference" (p. 51). He concluded that leadership in a culture of change will be evaluated "not by who you are as a leader but by *what leadership you produce in others"* (p. 136).

Fullan (2001a) also addressed the issue of government accountability measures and incentives that force change and indicated that they are only a part of the picture. They "are real but not particularly deep or lasting" (p. 220). He suggested that governments need to foster capacity building and noted that "many governments have put all their eggs in the accountability basket; a few have been good at combining pressure and support; and none have seriously affected capacity, although several are now working on it" (p. 220). With regard to the latter, Kretzman and McKnight (1993) also raised the issue of capacity–focused development. They argued that "[leaders] are discovering that wherever there are effective community development efforts, those efforts are based upon an understanding, or map of the community's assets, capacities and abilities" (p. 3).

In summary, change is complex and highly dependent on context and process. Fullan (2001b) argued that "complexities can be unlocked and even understood but rarely controlled" (p. 46). "[Leadership] is less about strategy and more about strategizing. And it *is* rocket science, not least because we are inundated with complex, unclear, and often contradictory advice" (p. 31).

Leadership

Ackerman (1996) noted that "we have come to see leadership as a quest. We have been frustrated by thinking, what must I learn *to do* to be an effective [leader]? As if one

could somehow ingest enough learning before starting the job" (p. 2). He suggested that instead of there being a "tool box" for leadership, the "comfort and fulfillment" of leadership can be found in viewing it as a "learning process". This learning process is governed by questioning, open enquiry and the sharing of ideas, the "common feature" of which is "respectful treatment of [leaders] as learners, as agents of their own development" (pp. 3-5). Therefore, if leaders are to transform themselves through learning then leadership transformation also includes, by way of proximal influence, the transformation of an organization and its membership.

Transformational and transactional leadership are dominating themes in much of the literature and research on leadership (Bass, 1985, 1995; Burns, 1978; Goodwin, Wofford, et. al., 1998; Grundstein-Amado, 1999; Pielstick, 1998; Schein, 1992; Sergiovanni, 1994a, 1994b, 1996; Telford, 1996; Wofford & Goodwin, 1994). This research is predicated on the work of Burns (1978) who initially identified these two styles of leadership.

Galen and Lowe (1996) built on Bass's (1985) view in which he argued that we should see "the transformational/transactional leadership paradigm as being comprised of complementary rather than polar constructs" (p. 1). They concluded that effective transactional leadership requires a transactional relationship between the leader and designated leader and therefore, leaders may be both transformational and transactional. How then, are transformational and transactional leadership described?

Transformational and Transactional Leadership

In the transformational paradigm, leaders attempt to bring change by altering the beliefs and attitudes of others. Burns (1978) identified "transformational leadership as a collective endeavor of mutual stimulation and inspiration that is jointly pursued by leaders and followers attaining organizational change" (Grunstein-Amado, 1999, p. 4). Bass (1985) viewed transformational leadership as a "process by which leaders inspire higher level needs of followers and increase their awareness to the consequences of their behavior rather than just engaging them in an exchange process of rewards for service" (p. 21). In addition, Rouche, Baker and Rose (1989) maintained that enacting change is further dependent on "the ability of the followers" (Grunstein-Amado, 1999, p. 4). Fiedler's (1996) research revealed that leader effectiveness can be measured by the leaders "ability to get a group to accomplish its mission" (p. 243) and that effectiveness is not dependent solely on the leader's abilities and attributes but also on "how well the leader's personality, abilities, and behaviors match the situation in which the leader operates" (p. 242).

Yammarino and Bass, as cited in Lowe and Kroek (1996) characterized transformational leaders as ones who "articulate a vision of the future that can be shared with peers and subordinates, [they] intellectually stimulate subordinates, and pay high attention to individual differences among people" (pp. 1-2). The transformational leader, according to Bass (1995), "needs to align the followers' self-interests in self-development with the interests of the group, organization, or society" (p. 1).

In keeping with this, Fiedler (1996) argued that "the most important lesson we have learned over the past forty years is probably that the leadership of groups and

organizations is a highly complex interaction between an individual and the social and task environment" (p. 243). Therefore, according to Avalio and Bass (1988), transformational leaders find "new ways of working, seek opportunities in the face of risk, prefer effective answers to efficient answers, and are less likely to support the status quo. Transformational leaders do not merely react to environmental circumstances—they attempt to shape and create them" (Galen & Lowe, 1996, p. 3). Thorns and Greenberger (1995) indicated that "the leader, in effect, fast forwards to the future and brings the future closer so that the leader and other people are able to see goals, future events, or potential outcomes more clearly" (p. 282). Similarly, Hesselbein (1999b) suggested that transformational leaders

> scan the environment for two or three trends; determine the implications of those trends; revisit the mission; ban the old hierarchy; challenge history ("the way we've always done it"); communicate with fewer more powerful messages; and disperse responsibility throughout the organization. (pp. 2-3)

The research of Butler, Cantrell and Flick (1999) examined outcomes of transformational leadership behaviour (TLB) and suggested that it leads directly to the following benefits: team members' satisfaction with supervisors; trust in supervisors and increased team members' satisfaction with their work; and promotes more creative interaction.

House and Shamir (1993) and Shamir, House, and Arthur (1993) further fostered understanding of the transformational-transactional process by proposing that transactional leaders focus on pragmatic paths to goals, whereas transformational leaders produce in their followers a higher (a) salience of the collective identity in their self-

concept, (b) sense of consistency between their self-concept and their actions on behalf of the leader and the collective, (c) level of self-esteem and a greater sense of self-worth, (d) similarity between their self-concept and their perception of the leader, (e) sense of collective efficacy, and (f) sense of meaningfulness in their work and lives. (Bass, 1995)

Burn's (1978) initial definition of transformational leadership was:

> The relations of most leaders and followers are transactional—leaders approach followers with an eye to exchanging one thing for another: Jobs for votes, or subsidies for campaign contributions. . . . Transforming leadership, while more complex, is more potent. The transforming leader recognizes and exploits an existing need or demand of a potential follower. But, beyond that, the transforming leader looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower. The result of transforming leadership is a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents. (p. 4)

Sergiovanni (1992a) however, pushes Burn's notion of leaders as agents further and suggested that "transformational leadership takes us into the realm of values, purposes, symbols, and meaning as new realities are negotiated and created" (p. 306). Sergiovanni (1990) considered transactional leadership as a first stage and central to accomplishing the routine organizational activities" (Lashway, 1997, p. 7) while Galen and Lowe (1996) offered the following summary of transactional leadership as characterized by Bass (1985), and Graen and Cashman (1975):

> The transactional leader is one who operates within the existing system or culture, has a preference for risk avoidance, pays attention to time constraints and efficiency, and generally prefers process over substance as a means for maintaining control. The skillful transactional leader is likely to be effective in stable, predictable environments where charting activity against prior performance is the most successful strategy. The leader prototype is consistent with an equitable leader-member exchange relationship where the leader fulfills the need of followers in exchange for performance meeting basic expectations. (pp. 1-2)

In a similar fashion, Grundstein-Amado (1999) characterized transactional leadership as "bartering" and suggested that this style of leadership is "social exchange" with a "stimulus-response model of behavior control and modification." They argued that "leaders control followers' behavior by imposing authority and power on one hand and satisfying followers' need on the other. Leaders offer organizational resources in exchange for followers' compliance and responsiveness" (p. 3). Kanungo and Mendoca (1996) agreed that transactional leadership "involves exchange, in which leaders use rewards and sanctions to induce followers to perform defined tasks and exhibit loyalty and commitment to the organization" (Grundstein-Amado, 1999, p. 3).

Although transactional leadership has been extensively discussed by researchers such as Burns (1978), Hollander (1978), and Bass (1985) there remains a question as to whether transformational leadership has the same level of effectiveness as transactional leadership within the structures of an organization. Galen and Lowe (1996) suggested that transformational leadership "has a greater value due to its impact on effectiveness at the higher [level] of the hierarchy" (p. 7). At the same time, Bass (1985) argued that transformational leadership is less likely to emerge in organizations that are "mechanistic" or "enmeshed with union rules and contracts, as well as departmental and faculty traditions" (p. 160). This observation applies to colleges in the Alberta sector since they have both faculty and staff collective agreements that can limit and obstruct change efforts. With regards to these obstacles, Bass, noted that "changes often occur mainly as a consequence of political tradeoffs among powerful coalitions" (p. 160).

Pawar and Eastman (1997) identified two types of organizational contexts that respond differently to transformational leadership:

> The organizational context most likely to enhance transformational leadership has an adaptation orientation, a boundary-spanning task system, an adhocracy, simple, or network structure, and a clan mode of governance. In contrast, the organizational context least likely to enhance transformational leadership has an efficiency orientation, a technical core task system, a machine or professional bureaucracy or a divisional structure, and a market or bureaucratic mode of governance. (cited in Egri & Herman, 2000, p. 582)

Egri and Herman concluded that "some organizations were more likely than others to foster the emergence of transformational leaders, defined as those who created vision and inspired and empowered followers. In particular, they identified four contextual factors: organizational orientation, organizational task system, organization structure, and mode of governance" (Egri and Herman, 2000, p. 578). This implies that transformational leaders may be required to change organizational structures, develop an organizational culture that is conducive to change, and develop new mechanisms for tasking.

Leadership Schemata

Bennis (1993) argued that the "single defining quality of leaders is the capacity to create and realize a vision" (p. 216). Pielstick (1998) proposed that a vision needs to be developed and implemented in a participatory way and that "the basis for shared vision derives from shared needs, values, beliefs, and purpose(s) of the leader and the followers. These create meaning and become powerful forces shaping behaviour in organizations. Thus the organizational culture affects the vision and is affected by it" (p. 4). He further

noted that in the best instances a shared vision is "elevated beyond the original concepts of either the leader or the led" (p. 4).

In his study, Pielstick (1998) examined college leaders and identified seven themes that emerged with respect to transformational leadership. They are: "(1) creating a shared vision, (2) communicating the vision, (3) building relationships, (4) developing a supporting organizational culture, (5) guiding implementation, (6) exhibiting character, and (7) achieving results" (p. 4).

Most importantly however, Pielstick (1998), in paraphrasing Bennis, noted that

> Transformational community college leaders engage in activities three and four levels deep, as identified in the results of the analysis of the literature, not only those identified by the seven major themes. This complexity may explain, in part, why successful leadership is still more rare than prevalent (Bennis, 1989). (p. 9)

The deeper levels of transformational leadership referred to in his study include repeated articulation of the organization's goals, values and mission, and a clarified vision through the use of metaphors, stories, and ceremonies. These leaders are emotional in their appeals and believe strongly in themselves and others; they are highly visible, overtly friendly and informal; they build trust through their actions because they are sincere and caring treating subordinates as equals; they show respect for and support growth in others; they find opportunities to recognize organizational and individual accomplishments; they treat people with dignity; they are passionate and are motivated by purpose; they model the values the organization holds; they take reasonable risks; they scan their environments for opportunities, guide processes, and nurture collaborative decision making. Finally, while empowering others they exhibit self confidence and have

the necessary energy and drive to pursue their organizational goals (pp. 4-9). In summary, Pielstick argued that these leaders are most effective when they "provoke heightened levels of commitment, self-sacrifice, motivation, and performance from followers" (p. 8). In addressing transformational leadership, Church and Waclawski (1998) cautioned that "motivational [leaders] are somewhat 'high on themselves'; that is to say, they have an over inflated opinion of the transformational nature of their leadership style. Their high energy, it would seem, carries into and biases their self-perceptions" (p. 16). This suggests transformational leaders must find an appropriate balance between their view of themselves and how others may view them, otherwise they may be acting in a counterproductive way in terms of being effective transformational leaders.

In continuing the discussion on transformational/transactional leadership, Wofford and Goodwin (1994) indicated that "transformational and transactional leaders may vary in the person schemata they have for their followers and for themselves" (Wofford, Goodwin, et al, 1998, p.3). For example,

> transformational leaders expect their followers to have attributes such as self-reliance, innovativeness, and initiative (Bass, 1985; Conger & Kanungo, 1987; House, 1977). Transactional leaders expect their followers to have attributes such as commitment to goals, expectancy of goal attainment, expectancy of rewards, and need for role clarity (House & Mitchell, 1974). (Wofford, Goodwin, et al, 1998, p. 4)

Wofford, Goodwin, et al, agree in general terms with the arguments made by Bass (1985), Conger and Kanungo (1987) that

> transformational follower-schemata include content regarding the follower's loyalty, self-respect, self-confidence, trust, overall purpose, follower uniqueness, follower intellectual capability, creativity. . . [while the] transformational self-schema includes items related to charismatic behavior, individualized consideration behavior, intellectual stimulation

> behavior, inspirational behavior, and empowerment behaviors. . . [and that] transformational leaders also possess within their follower-schemata attributes associated with transactional behavior, thus allowing for acceptance of variation in follower behavior when warranted by the situation. (pp. 4-5)

Concomitantly, Church and Waclawski (1998) argued for identifying the strengths and weaknesses of both the transformational and transactional perspectives and suggested that "it is important for professionals and academics alike to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of each perspective and to develop methods to accurately identify and subsequently place these different types of leaders in appropriate positions in organizational settings" (p. 18).

In closing this section, I am drawn to a study by Wofford, Goodwin, et al. (1998) in which they concluded that "given [a] wide variety of positive outcomes associated with transformational leadership, the development of transformational leaders in organizations should be a priority" (p. 17) and what Ackerman (1996) stated about leadership, "leadership should not be undertaken blindly or lightly. [We need leaders] who not only aspire to move their schools ahead but also have the background and the capacities to make sense of their dynamic organizations and to share that sense with the school community so that its efforts will be profitably directed" (p. 12).

Involving Others in Leadership

Hesselbein (1998a) addressed Drucker's notion of the importance of finding leadership within an organization when she reaffirmed

> that organizations exist to make people's strengths effective and their weaknesses irrelevant. And this is the work of effective leaders. Drucker

> also tells us that "there may be 'born leaders,' but they are surely far too few to depend on them". The future leadership team—the core contributors ready for the challenge of rigorous leadership development—is dispersed throughout your organization now. (p. 2)

Hock (2000) offered the following observation with regards to the reciprocity of leadership and followership: "Leader presumes follower. Follower presumes choice. One who is coerced to the purposes, objectives, or preferences of another is not a follower in any true sense of the word, but an object of manipulation" (pp. 2-3).

Leadership is not a position; it is a role whose primary function is to develop adaptive strategies to respond to the dramatic changes taking place within our world and our organizations. These adaptive strategies are evolutionary in nature and subject to constant change. As Pinchot (1996) noted,

> the one thing that is becoming clearer and clearer is that the institutions of the past may be obsolete and that new forms of governance and leadership will have to be learned. Furthermore, as the rate of change itself increases, learning ability will not consist of the one-time learning of a new system; *perpetual* learning and change will be the only constant. (p. 67)

Leadership is engagement and demands suppleness in thinking, acting and reading situations. Leadership is "service" and influence that can change the individual's and the organization's behavior. Blanchard et al. (1999) suggested that real transformation comes from the heart—from the inside-out—and that servant leadership is performance coaching—tell them what to do, show them what to do, let them try, observe their performance and then praise their progress or redirect (pp. 175-176).

Goldsmith (1996) and Smith (1996) also addressed how leaders exercise the follower and servant aspect of leadership by identifying critical behaviors and skills that

can make leaders effective followers; these can be summarized as ask, follow-up and grow. Smith (1996) expanded on this idea and provided specifics such as asking questions instead of giving answers, providing opportunities for others to lead, doing real work in support of others instead of only doing the reverse, helping others to follow each other, being a match maker, and seeking common understanding instead of gaining superficial consensus (pp. 205-206).

Questioning and probing are ways of finding out where and why problems exist and ascertaining possible solutions. The activity of engaging in questioning gives leaders the opportunity to "find the strategic potential in ordinary actions [and] the opportunity to interconnect daily life and the enactment of a vision or direction. Problem-finding is as important as problem-solving" (Bolman & Deal, 1994, p. 17).

Many of the writers recognized that at the forefront of leadership change is the need for change in the traditional modes of operations. Pinchot (1996) suggested that

> the challenges of systemic change where hierarchy is inadequate will, I believe, push us to new views of leadership based on new principles. These challenges cannot be met by isolated heroic leaders. They will require a unique mix of different people, in different positions, who lead in different ways. (p. 57)

Pinchot further suggested that leaders of the future will need to have "extraordinary levels of perception and insight into the realities of the world and into themselves" (p. 67). These leaders

> will *not* assume that all groups need leadership, they will *not* assume that leadership means hierarchy and control of others, and they will *not* assume that accountability must always be individual. Instead, the leader of the future will be a person with the characteristics mentioned above who can lead and follow, be central and marginal, be hierarchically above and below, be individualistic and a team player, and above all, be a perpetual

> learner. . . . Perhaps the most salient aspect of future leadership will be that these characteristics will not be present in a few people all the time but will be present in many people some of the time, as circumstances change and as different people develop the insight to move into leadership roles. (pp. 67-68).

Handy (1996) argued that leadership requires an unusual combination of skills that are paradoxical in nature. He noted that leaders must possess a belief in themselves that is balanced with humility and a reasonable level of doubt. That leaders must have a passion for the job coupled with the ability to step out of their own boxes and be aware of other worlds. And that leaders must have a love of people while being able to be alone and carry the worries and burdens privately. Finally, he argued that leaders

> also have to live vicariously, deriving their satisfaction from the success of others and giving those others the recognition that they themselves are often denied. . . . Living with these paradoxes requires great strength of character. It also requires a belief in what one is doing. (pp. 8-9)

Kouzes and Posner (1996) also addressed the importance of leadership character and suggested that leaders need to be honest, forward looking, inspirational while fostering loyalty, hard work, caring, pride, teamwork, individual effectiveness, ethical behavior and the building of consensus. It is also the leader's role to ensure that members have an understanding of job expectations and that they try to reduce job stress and tension (pp. 101-110).

One might look at the previous descriptions of new leadership thinking and observe that all is "easier said than done." Blank (1995) noted that leadership is a field of interaction and that this interaction is dependent on the fact that a leader has willing followers and that not everyone will follow a leader's initiative (pp 10-11). This suggests

that not everyone may be interested in participating and that some individuals may prefer to simply watch and critique while others engage in change efforts.

Ulrich (1996) offered the following compelling synthesis of being a leader:

> Leaders must turn aspirations into actions . . . aspirations come in many forms: strategies, goals, missions, visions, foresight, and plans. Regardless of the term, leaders create aspirations. . . . They focus on the future by visualizing what can be; they connect and integrate the entire value chain of a firm [internal and external]; they create energy and enthusiasm about what can be; and they engage employees' hearts (emotion), minds (cognitions), and feet (action). (pp. 210-211)

Humans as Agents

The fundamental aspect and condition of the human experience is choice. We choose our vocational and avocational endeavors and we choose the organization and living communities in which we affect our multiple and divergent choices. Ultimately, we choose our behavior within these communities based on our motivations to act. The source for these decisions are what Sergiovanni (1992b) called "mindscapes." These he described as "the mental pictures in our heads about how the world works [which] are often tacitly held. They program what we believe counts, help create our realities, and provide a basis for decisions" (p. 8).

In keeping with the discussion on choice and the human motivation that influences it, Hackman and Oldjams (1976) identified three psychological states believed to be critical in determining whether a person will be initially motivated at work: meaningfulness, responsibility and knowledge of the results (cited in Sergiovanni, 1992, p. 60). They further underscored the need for empowerment, risk taking, diversity, recognition, and reward. According to Sergiovanni (1992a)

> Human beings pass moral judgments on their individual urges. As a result, they often sacrifice self-interest for the sake of other causes and reasons. People choose largely on the basis of preferences and reasons.
> . . . The Traditional Motivation Rule—although what gets rewarded often gets done, the reverse is also likely to be true: what does not get rewarded does not get done. . . . One alternative to this rule is 'What is *rewarding* gets done.' (pp. 24-26)

Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi (1996) described *flow* as the key to intrinsic motivation. In his research, this optimal experience was described in almost identical terms by the participants, regardless of the activities that produced it, and regardless of age, gender or race. All had clearly defined goals every step of the way with opportunity for immediate feedback. There was a balance between challenge and skill, distractions were eliminated, there was no fear of failure, no self-consciousness, and the sense of time became so distorted that the activity became autotelic. In other words, individuals became so engaged with the activity, that the work, despite any personal cost, was done for the pure enjoyment of the experience; they did it because it was rewarding (pp. 110-113).

Etzioni (1988) supported this notion when he "challenged the dominance of views of human motivation and decision making that place too much emphasis on rational choice and individual decision making. He pointed out that our emotions, preferences, values, and beliefs and the social bonds with which we identify count too" (cited in Sergiovanni, 1994b, p. 54). Sergiovanni (1996) elaborated on Etzioni's position and suggested that

> Need theories and practices can be conveniently sorted into two categories: those that emphasize rational connections between us and our wants, among us, and between us and our work, and those that emphasize cultural connections. Rational and cultural connections parallel the concepts of *gesellschaft* and *gemeinschaft*. Gesellschaft exists when connections within and among people are based primarily on the rational

> pursuit of self-interest. Gemeinschaft exists when connections within and among people are based primarily on loyalties, purposes, and sentiments. (p. 57)

Values and needs play important parts in constructing administrators' and members' mindscapes. These mindscapes influence organizational behavior; they set the tone for engagement. Leadership requires communication and interaction with members and the ability to influence in order to make things work and ultimately be an effective and successful organization.

Haller and Strike (1986) offered, "success depends on personality and style, on carefully chosen ways of inducing others to contribute to the organization" (cited in Sergiovanni, 1992a, p. 34). This position is supported by Hesselbein (1998b) who suggested that

> Transformation requires moving people out of their organizational boxes into flexible, fluid management systems. We cannot continue to put people into little squares on a structure chart. Psychologically it boxes them in. I prefer circles—concentric circles of functions and positions in a staffing design that looks almost organic. Job rotation becomes an enriching reality. People move in circular ways—learning new skills, expanding positions. We need to ban a hierarchy not suited to today's knowledge workers, 'who carry their tool kits in their heads'. (p. 2)

To induce others to work towards a common goal first requires that leaders "look carefully" for what Senge (1996) described as "internal community builders or internal networkers" (p. 54). For Senge, "it is very difficult to identify internal networkers because they can be people from many different organizational positions. . . . Internal community builders work on different levels, commensurate with their different levels in the organization" (pp. 54-55). He further argued that

> the most unappreciated leadership role is that of the internal networkers, or what we often call internal community builders. Internal networkers are effective for the very reason that top-management efforts to initiate change can backfire. One of the most interesting paradoxes in fostering deep change may be that "no power *is* power." Precisely because they have no positional authority, internal networkers are free to move about a large organization relatively unnoticed. . . . The only authority possessed by internal networkers comes from the strength of their convictions and the clarity of their ideas. (p. 54)

Furthermore, internal networkers are those that are already highly motivated, have a high level of knowledge, and are willing to assist with implementing change; often they are predisposed to doing things differently, challenging themselves, and seek "continuous learning opportunities." Networkers are creative thinkers, the "shakers and movers" of an organization (Senge, 1996, p. 54). They act as catalysts and supporters for organizational change.

> As practical knowledge is built, internal networkers continue to serve as organizational 'seed carriers,' connecting people of like mind in diverse settings to each other's learning efforts. Gradually they may help in developing the more formal coordination and steering mechanisms needed to leverage from local experiments to broader, organizational learning. (Senge, 1996, pp. 55-56)

Finally, internal builders are those that are more willing to show support for their leaders. They understand and have an appreciation for the complex and difficult task leadership can be because they have, informally and perhaps tacitly, engaged in its practice. Most importantly, they are the ones that can motivate and cause others to change much in the same way they motivated themselves to change. They are the informal leaders who can lead those around them; they have influence above and below. Success is very much dependent on them for they are the ones that carry the community "banner."

Similarly, Senge (1996) referred to internal leaders or community builders as "the 'seed carriers' of a new culture, who can move freely about the organization to find those who are predisposed to bringing about change" (p. 46).

Commentary

The generic literature on leadership and followership in this review is normative. It implies that leaders who have strong moral character, exhibit positive human values, respect and value others, can be successful leaders. This prescriptive approach suggests, that by looking at the successful attributes of leaders across a broad section of organizations, and identifying effective leadership characteristics, they can be easily translated into any context. This process fails to recognize contextual differences between private and public sector organizations, or take into account environmental conditions such as market economies, the political context, and the role of governments. In addition, the generic literature does not recognize the difficulties in leading change in organizational cultures with different policy governance models, collective bargaining units, and conflicting agendas of diverse constituent groups.

Additionally, the literature fails to identify exceptions to the ideal. For example, the literature recommends a dissolving of hierarchies but does not identify under what circumstances hierarchy may still be needed to ensure operational success. It suggests that internal leaders, with different leadership abilities, are required for organizational transformation, yet fails to indicate how internal leaders are identified or what attributes internal leaders might possess. And, the literature implies that successful leaders simply create energy and enthusiasm about a vision, and that through having integrity, being

honest, and believing in oneself, they can motivate others to meet complex challenges. It also fails to stress the importance of a match between the leader and organization or the importance of, and difficulty in building multiple levels of relationships.

These ideas and suggestions are realistic only to the extent practitioners can develop effective strategies suited to the situational realities of their own organizations and its contexts.

The Metaphor of Building Community

Community once meant a place, or those living in a place. Community is now most frequently thought of as a group of individuals with common interests and characteristics. The word is derived from the middle English comunete, via the French comuneté, derived from the Latin communitat, meaning common, and is defined as a body of people associated by common status and pursuits (Oxford English Dictionary, 1986). For most of us community is a place that provides us space to develop new realities with others for mutual benefit. It is a place we take pride in and feel safe.

We make choices on where and what type of community we live in, whom we relate to, and with whom we build relationships. We make choices on our role and purpose within our communities. We chose how we contribute to improving our communities. Individually we take action that affects how our community "looks" and "feels"; we make a difference because we have choice.

These choices are fundamental in defining who we are, how we view our place within our community, and what we deem to be important to us and the persons around us. They are, what Sergiovanni (1994a) described as, "informal" communities; they

belong to all of us (p. 4). He drew our attention to the sentiment that "informal communities are socially organized around relationships and the felt interdependencies that nurture them (Blau & Scott, 1962). . . . [They] are defined by their centers of values, sentiments, and beliefs that provide the needed conditions for creating a sense of 'we' from 'I'" (p. 4). Sergiovanni (1994b) further indicated that not all groups are motivated by self interest or profitability and that "the connections among people are not based on contract but on commitments" (p. 217).

In contrast, "formal" communities, such as our working environments, impose controls and eliminate many of the choices we enjoy in our "informal" communities. Our formal communities are

> different in both quality and kind. In [informal] communities we create our social lives with others who have intentions similar to ours. In organizations relationships are constructed for us by others and become codified into a system of hierarchies, roles, and role expectations. (Sergiovanni, 1994a, p. 4)

In our professional environments we are assigned specific tasks and responsibilities, and are accountable for their outcomes. We are required to work and communicate with individuals of differing attitudes, perceptions, values, and belief systems. Our professional lives are resonant with expectations, motivations, and stresses very different from those in our private lives. How people behave in their social relationships in informal communities differs from how they behave in formal communities, specifically from the perspective of choice. Despite this difference, there is common ground.

First, the metaphor of building community is an easy one to appreciate and embrace. It has positive connotations and a natural humanistic tone. It reflects our need

for social engagement. We understand community because we all live in them, and we can embrace them because we appreciate what our communities provide us—a comfortable and safe place for leading our lives. The concept of community is in keeping with our social beliefs, values, and needs. We desire the harmony that is community. Sergiovanni (1994a) noted that "relationships within a community of mind are based not on contracts but on understandings about what is shared and on the emerging web of obligations to embody that which is shared" (p. 3).

Second, community transmits the sentiment of individuals having common interests, ownership, and the willingness to participate. Ultimately, we choose how we conduct ourselves. This is not to argue that a work environment should embrace all the attributes and values of our informal communities but rather that the conceptual aspects, the mindset, and the behaviors can be transferred to our organizational environments. As Sergiovanni pointed out, "community can help [individuals] be transformed from a collection of 'I's' to a collective 'we,' thus providing them with a unique and enduring sense of identity, belonging, and place" (p. xiii).

Embracing community promotes change in our motivations and perceptions of our working lives. It is about choosing to change how we "think" and how we "act" in our work environments. It is about meta-cognition, thinking about thinking and reflecting on how we "see" and what we "feel" about community that we can articulate in our workplace. And last, it is about replacing old language with new; and organization with community. This common ground of understanding and appreciation for the metaphor offers us a natural transfer of the concept from informal to formal contexts.

In *Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention* , Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi (1996) articulated this transformation of thinking when he described how individuals can move from an "autotelic" to "exotelic" condition. He described autotelic as "there being no reason for doing [activities] except to feel the experience they provide" (p. 113). For example, our recreational, spiritual and cultural pursuits are autotelic. Exotelic activities, on the other hand, are those that we do "not because we enjoy them but in order to get at some later goal" (p. 113). Most of the activities required of us at our workplace are exotelic. Csikszentmihalyi's research focused on how we can transport the autotelic condition of our private lives to our professional lives. He argued for what he described as *flow* —the natural human capability to be creative—that can make *any* activity autotelic. In regard to this conceptual agreement between our professional and private behaviors he proposed that "if work and family life become autotelic, then there is nothing wasted in life, and everything we do is worth doing for its own sake" (p. 113).

The metaphor would seem incomplete without addressing the constituent component of the metaphor—that of building. The word building implies that the work is developmental, or in progress. Building also implies that there is a vision which provides a foundation on which the construction of the metaphor is built. In this case the literature is most consistent, repeatedly indicating that creating a shared vision can only begin with a foundation of equal trust, shared values and shared purposes. Unequivocally, the sentiment of shared behavior, as it applies to all aspects of human behavior—responsibility, accountability, respect, participatory decision making, successes, failures, rewards, and motivations—can only be truthful when acted upon without prejudice. Royal and Rossi (1997) supported this when they stated that

> in a school community, communication is open, participation is widespread, teamwork is prevalent, and diversity is incorporated. Staff members and students share a vision for the future of the school, a common sense of purpose, and a common set of values. They care about, trust, and respect each other, and they recognize each other's efforts and accomplishments. (p. 2)

Rapid changes in environmental conditions, however, can prohibit completing the construction as planned. Community building thus requires flexibility, responsiveness and sensitivity to environmental and human change; in this sense it is contextual and timeless. The process of building is a ceaseless activity; it is a journey. It is the participation in this journey that makes pursuing and engaging in the activity meaningful. How we build and what we build far outweigh any notion of completion. Improvement, then, is the plan. Royal and Rossi (1997) suggested that leaders wishing to build community

> begin by asking questions. How will we work together to foster a culture supportive of every school member's learning? Can we acknowledge the essential value of each individual . . . while respecting the divergent goals and styles of each? How do we guide the process to develop in our students the cooperative life habits that their futures will demand? (p. 2)

In précis, building community is a metaphor for understanding what is possible and how it may be possible. It is a metaphor for facilitating change in how we behave and perceive both our formal "exotelic" and informal "autotelic" lives. At the very core of this metaphor is our need to belong to something that is larger than ourselves so that we can reach out and be a part of something that is meaningful, not only to us, but also our society and fellow humans. It is a *chosen* value that is central to the human experience. In *Building community,* Sergiovanni (1994a) stated "the need for

community is universal. A sense of belonging, of continuity, of being connected to others and to ideas and values that make our lives meaningful and significant—these needs are shared by all of us" (p. xiii).

To this, one should add that building community is a vision, a purpose and a goal embedded in the human desire to do good things, arguably a need that is central to the human spirit. It is a metaphor that challenges us to improve, adapt, and facilitate change from the "inside-out." Clearly, what is being described is a tall order—perhaps even utopian; nevertheless, it is a metaphor worthy of our consideration, time and effort because it is a metaphor that embodies the art of being human during an uncertain, ambiguous, and very complex epoch.

Emerging Need for Community

In searching for the need and purpose of the metaphor, we begin by looking back at the theories, principles, and practices concerning organizational behavior. Researchers (e.g., Bennis, 1990; Blank, 1995; Bolman & Deal, 1992 & 1994; Goldsmith, 1996; Handy, 1996; Pinchot, 1996; Senge, 1996; Sergiovanni, 1990, 1992 & 1994a) have written much about organizational and leadership behavior. They provided an eclectic combination of ideas relating to political and symbolic leadership, situational leadership, transformational and transactional leadership, instructional leadership, ethical and moral leadership, servant leadership, membership, and followership. The variety of perspectives about leadership and administrative thinking has no doubt been influenced by practice, and as practice has changed, so has the way in which we understand organizational and

leadership behavior. Sergiovanni (1994a) commented on what has gone before with the following observation:

> Community?" you might respond. "What's new about that? We're already into community." Clearly "community" is the new buzzword in the language of education. Yesterday it was "culture" rivaled by "empowerment," "collegiality," and "transformational." The day before it was "MBO," "situational leadership," "school effectiveness," and "instructional leadership." Yesterday's ideas are still popular but are beginning to slip a little. These ideas are on the wane. (p. xi)

Regardless of previous successes or failures, what differentiates the community approach from that which has gone before is that it embraces many of the previous notions of organizational behavior and synthesizes them, pulling them together in a broader more all encompassing way. It does not exclude or censor. The metaphor allows leaders to choose from the literature, creating a stronger, richer, and more relevant understanding of leadership behavior. It is the next logical step in the creative process; taking what has gone before and creating something that is new. Ackerman (1996) stated, clearly that "if a sense of community is to develop, [then] lay wisdom and professional expertise not only must be valued but must be merged" (p. 144). The community then attempts to dissolve the traditional hierarchical design and assumptions about power and control. According to Kouzes and Posner (1996) "leadership is everyone's business" (p. 110) while Bridges and Mitchell (2000) added that "it is when the organization is in transition that leaders themselves often need help" (p. 4).

Community, in its most positive light, is about the fundamental aspect of democracy with its shared values and ideas. It is about us, how we can create our own unique organizational cultures, how we can empower each other, how we can have

mutual respect for our similarities and differences and how we can transform ourselves while transforming our organization. It is about looking for the best in each other and doing what is best for the whole and the broader community the organization serves. Community therefore is a theme that can assist us with gaining a better understanding of ourselves and our worlds. It is an interpersonal theme, one that offers us a place to reside and experience the challenges of reality. Hesselbein (1999a) argued "the temptation to deny reality, and daring to define the new realities, may be a leader's greatest challenge" (p. 1).

On the surface, the imagery and theme of community may be easy to embrace and appreciate but the primary and most difficult task still remains: How do we begin to adopt and practice authentic community?

Building Community

> I want you to imagine that much used—and over-used—image of Rodin's *The Thinker*. I want you to imagine that chin-on-hand pose which is supposed to come to any thinker who is being more than just frivolous. As a matter of fact, I believe that thinking should be active and brisk rather than gloomy and solemn. But the traditional image is a useful one for the moment. Throw yourself into that pose—physically not mentally—and you will become a thinker. Why? Because if you playact being a thinker, you will become one. (Edward De Bono, 1985, p. 6).

In keeping with this notion and adapting it to the metaphor, Sergiovanni (1994) argued that we have to go beyond the use of written declarations and begin to "think community, believe in community, and practice community—to change the basic metaphor for the school itself to community" (p. xiii). In keeping with this notion, Bridges and Mitchell (2000) argued that;

> Leaders of institutions have to believe and declare that there is a future for their institution, some hope of glory, whatever that might be. Second, they have to make clear to the individuals that they are special to that dream of glory. That they are there because they can make a contribution and so can believe that there is a reason for their existence. (p. 8)

Sergiovanni (1992b) noted that once a commitment is made and accepted we must then move forward by making three important choices:

> We would begin with *what* to follow: the shared values and beliefs that define us as a community, and the ideals that define us as professionals. Then we would ask *why* because it is morally right to do so; community and professional membership are morally understood as duties and obligations. And *whom* should we follow? Ourselves as members and as morally conscious, committed people. (p. 32)

Building a covenant of shared values that bonds people together while transforming an organization into a community is not an easy leadership task; it requires great effort and the endurance of "growing pains" by all members. There are no methods, procedures, techniques or "ready made" formulas for doing so. As Sergiovanni (1994a) observed,

> there is no recipe for community building—no correlates, no workshop agenda, no training package. Community cannot be borrowed or bought. This reality makes the job of building community harder on the one hand but better on the other. Recipes are *too easy* to implement and for that reason they too often result in practices that are grafted onto the school without significantly influencing the school for very long. If we are interested in community building, then we, along with other members of the proposed community, are going to have to invent our own practice of community. It is as simple, and as hard, as that. (p. 5)

Leaders should not be discouraged by this monumental proposition. Hesselbein (1999a) offered that "turbulent times create possibilities beyond today's most optimistic views. Leaders can unleash the talents and energies of all of their people as they pursue a vision . . . [of a] cohesive community" (p. 4). However, "a leader cannot cultivate

community if he or she doesn't believe in it or trust in its value" (Ackerman, 1996, p. 143).

The leadership required to implement organizational change is a highly underestimated, undervalued, and onerous task. Moreover, it should not be the sole responsibility of leadership but comes about "as a result of the commitments of both the minds and hearts of the total school community—teachers, parents, students, administrators and school boards" (Blumer cited in Sergiovanni, 1994a, p. 1).

Community building is contextual and subject to an organization's unique demographics, its readiness and willingness to change, and the policies and existing mechanisms of governance. Changes in these are required to begin the transformation into an "authentic" community. Hesselbein (1999a) described the reality of equal access when she stated, "we abandon policies that impede, while developing policies that facilitate inclusion" (p. 3). Sergiovanni (1996) concurred when he noted "we are into authentic community when community becomes embodied in the [organization's] policy structure itself" (p. xiv). Changes in thinking, policies and governance structures require trust and sometimes "leaps of faith." Thus, Ackerman (1996) proposed, "trusting in the community's judgments and actions requires the [leader] to rein in and sometimes even to abdicate authority and power traditionally assigned to him or her" (p. 148) and concluded, "as [leaders], your challenge is to trust in the school community's collective judgment and authority to resolve its own question and problems" (p. 150).

A high degree of trust can only be developed through a shared consultative process, one that is pursued by the collective including both internal and external stakeholders. Leaders can do this by focusing their efforts on bringing to the surface and acting upon

the ideas generated by the members of the organization and the community it serves. They do this by creating an environment of engagement.

Kim and Mauborgne (1997) identified three principles for creating an environment for fair process:

> *Engagement* means involving individuals in the decisions that affect them by asking for their input and allowing them to refute the merits of one another's ideas and assumptions. Engagement communicates management's respect for individuals and their ideas. Encouraging refutation sharpens everyone's thinking and builds better collective wisdom. Engagement results in better decisions by management and greater commitment from all involved to executing those decisions.
>
> *Explanation* means that everyone involved and affected should understand why final decisions are made as they are. An explanation of the thinking that underlies decisions makes people confident that managers have considered their opinions and have made those decisions impartially in the overall interests of the company. An explanation allows employees to trust managers' intentions even if their own ideas have been rejected. It also serves as a powerful feedback loop that enhances learning.
>
> *Expectation clarity* requires that once a decision is made managers state clearly the new rules of the game. Although the expectations may be demanding, employees should know up front by what standards they will be judged and the penalties for failure. What are the new targets and milestone? Who is responsible for what? To achieve fair process, it matters less what the new rules and policies are and more that they are clearly understood. When people clearly understand what is expected of them, political jockeying and favoritism are minimized, and they can focus on the job at hand. (p. 69)

Royal and Rossi (1997) cautioned us about the additional challenges that engagement may create. They warned that "unless a sound fabric of interpersonal relationships can be woven as improvement activities are planned and launched, potential benefits of these activities may be lost to tension and dissension" (p. 4). Nevertheless, they maintained that "above all, [leaders] must create a climate and a culture for change.

They do this by speaking about the vision often and enthusiastically; by encouraging experiments; by celebrating successes and forgiving failures; and by remaining steadfast in the face of the inevitable problems and missteps" (Royal & Rossi, 1997, p. 9).

Leaders also need to begin to place emphasis on "careful listening" and providing the vehicles to enable members to succeed. According to Pielstick (1998), "listening constitutes the most important component of communication. . . . to fully understand the perceptions of followers, their needs, and their concerns" (p. 4).

Similarly, Ackerman (1996) suggested that leaders not only listen to their constituents but also to themselves. First,

> listening to your school helps you succeed in two basic ways: it tells you where and how your leadership is most needed, and it tells you how you are doing as a leader . . . Think of the school as your teacher. Its people and patterns of daily activity can teach you where people are succeeding and where they are struggling, what issues are dominating peoples' attention, and where your focus needs to be directed. (p. 159).

Second,

> it is very important that principals listen to themselves—their feelings about colleagues, their sense of the tone in the building, and their gut evaluations. This allows you to understand how your actions, expressions, and feelings are influencing others. It generates intrapersonal knowledge in the form of a "reality check" that lets you see yourself more clearly—and lets you know that you can trust yourself—as a leader. (pp. 160-161)

Additionally, leaders need to focus on facilitation and providing procedural details based on their in-depth knowledge of the larger issues—constraints, resources, historical perspectives, governance policies, collective agreements, and other environmental factors; they need to be, what Ackerman referred to as "linkers of resources." Sergiovanni (1994b) similarly noted that,

> in [organizations], this means that, instead of worrying constantly about setting the direction and then engaging teachers and others in a successful march (often known as planning, organizing, leading, motivating, and controlling), the 'leader' can focus more on removing obstacles, providing material and emotional support, taking care of the management details that make any journey easier, sharing in the comradeship of the march and in the celebration when the journey is completed. (p. 43)

However, it is simply not enough to state it, read it, and expect others to do it. Each individual must commit for the benefit of the whole. "If you want to belong you have to believe" (Sergiovanni, 1994a, p. xiv). Or as Ackerman (1996) declared, "trust in community [and] trust in yourself as a leader" (p. 139).

Regardless of the type of role leadership plays in building community, the membership does not always translate into consensus. Ackerman (1996) noted that "sometimes, no matter how much participation we had, we could not obtain consensus. In those cases, it was necessary to make a decision to more forward. . . to our surprise, not all staff wanted to be involved in most decisions" (p. 157).

Hesselbein (1999b) noted that "true" organizational transformation "reflects the realities of people working together every day" (p. 1). Building community means that we need to commit to exercising our emotions, thoughts, and feelings—and the pains associated with them. It means that we have knowledge of and respect for each other's differences, that we make others feel safe and needed, and that we are hopeful about the our future and the future of those we work with. It is about challenging ourselves and others to grow. Ackerman (1996) noted that "the more we observe community, the more we are convinced that . . . community offers far greater opportunities for student and staff growth than they can as a collection of individuals" (p. 141).

Community also cultivates a *raison d'être* by believing things can and should change. Community building begins with us recognizing that we have the power to change. Wheatley (1999) addressed the notion of fearlessness of the future and our ability to change it when she stated that

> *We don't have to know the future in order to be prepared for it.* Organizations and communities that learn to work together, that know how to learn together, that trust one another, and that become more expansive and inclusive, develop the capacity to deal with the unknown. They create a capacity for working and thinking together that enables them to respond quickly and intelligently to whatever the future presents. (p. 7)

Core Values of Community

Central to the theme of community are our systems of beliefs and values. Community can only be authentic "when community values are at the center of our thinking" (Sergiovanni, 1996, p. xiv). Raun and Leithwood (1992) addressed this issue earlier when they noted that "the solution is to hold a set of values that honor the values of others. Participat[ory decision making] reflects this position, especially in combination with the value of respect for others" (cited in Hallinger, Leithwood, & Murphy, 1992, p. 68).

In keeping with the values and respect for the variety, richness, and diversity of ideas that participants can contribute, Gardner writing on the theory of multiple intelligences (1993) noted that "an individual-centered school would be rich in assessment of individual abilities and proclivities" (p. 10). Different intelligences have different strengths and potencies, and can offer different experiences and ways of viewing the world. This can lead to more effective and contextually relevant change.

Brandsford supported this position when he wrote, “future educational leaders [need] to understand why people with different types of life experiences can be valuable to consult—they will often have unique perspectives on problems that will escape the attention of others” (cited in Hallinger, et al., 1992, p.187).

Strike, Haller, and Soltis (1988) described a set of ethical principles that capture the essential qualities and values of participatory decision making in the following terms:

The principle of benefit maximization. Whenever choice is required, the best and most just decision is the one that results in the most benefit for the most people. It judges the morality of our actions by their consequences. Sometimes it may require that we treat one group unfairly so that another group can benefit more.

The principle of equal respect. Respecting the intrinsic worth of humans and treating them with dignity and respect. Recognize people as an end rather than means; this entails considering them to be free and rational moral agents.

Personal liberty. Noninterference in people’s private lives produces better consequences and more happiness in their professional activities. Individuals are the best judges of what makes them happy. Freedom of choice permits society to grow since people can try new, different and valuable lifestyles. If we interfere with choice then we are treating individuals as though they are obstacles to our ends; thus negating the freedom of choice.

Equal opportunity. Suggests that equals are treated equally while unequals are treated unequally. People who are different should be treated differently because some factors are relevant while others are not and that different kinds of treatment produces different results.

Due process. Apart from being a legal issue, due process is also an ethical concept. Features of due process include: giving notice, following reasonable evidence and procedures, and applying consistent standards that have a rational connection to a legitimate purpose. In other words, due process requires administrators to make reasonable decisions by following rational procedures that generate reliable evidence and consistency in judgments. The effort undertaken to generate evidence should be in proportion to the seriousness of the issue. The authors note that the principle of benefit maximization should be subordinate to the principle of equal respect for due process.

Democracy. To follow the will of the people. Majority rule has to be willing to consider the interest of minorities. Decisions cannot be made without considering the interest of all parties. Democracy is people behaving democratically. However, not everyone is entitled to participate in every decision making process. Generally, they are entitled to participate when the decision being made affects them or if they belong to a group to whom the decision belongs. Expertise should be subservient when goals are democratically decided. Democracy shows respect for persons through freedom of choice. Inherent in this is the moral obligation to make responsible choices by being sensitive to the wrong and good done to others. It also requires one to be rational by collecting relevant information and appraising different arguments. Finally, democracy requires one to be morally intuitive—to sense what is right or wrong. By not doing so, one undermines the foundation of democracy and the moral education appropriate to free people.

These principles are not all inclusive to the notion of community, but they are core and fundamental. They are also interdependent; one does not exist without the other. It is

important to note, however, that sometimes they may be in conflict with one another; often there is a paradox that makes the adherence to them difficult and that inherent within them are values that may be silenced or ignored. This leads to reactions, disappointments, and negativity by individuals who have not embraced a core set of values. They may even cause discomfort with others and for themselves.

Building community then, is dependent on respect for differences, a choosing to accept those decisions we disagree with. Ackerman (1996) indicated that when values are shared publicly, then "you not only articulate the professional mission of your leadership, but you will behave in a way that others can trust as well—even if they do not agree" (pp. 157-158). In addition, it is simply not enough to say we choose to accept a decision but rather that we need to know and share our reasons for "why."

> We need to be in touch with our basic values and with our connections to others. In other words, we must become more authentic with ourselves and others. If we are successful, we will be able to transform schools from ordinary organizations into learning communities. (Sergiovanni, 1992b, p. 29)

If we are to be successful in communicating our feelings, we need to be truthful with ourselves. Above all, values need to be supported by truth. Wheatley (1999) suggested,

> 'Tell the truth and tell it fast'. Secrecy feeds the problem, not the solution. And secrecy sets in motion some powerful dynamics that end up destroying capacity. People who learn they've been kept in the dark or fed misleading information lose confidence in leaders quickly. In the absence of real information, they fill the vacuum with rumors and fear. And whenever people feel excluded from involvement, they withdraw and focus on self-protection. They no longer believe anything or anybody—they become unavailable, distrusting and focused only on self-preservation. As the veil of secrecy thickens, the capacity for solution-finding disappears. (p. 6)

Hesselbein (1999c) further underscored the need for a strong set of core values when she stated that

> Young people are looking for evidence of values-driven leadership because they see too many examples of people in positions of authority who are self-serving, focused only on financial lines, or simply indifferent to others. (p. 3)

Criticism of Community

The community metaphor is not without weakness. Community implies a collective culture and, as Enomoto (1997) noted, "this collective perspective fails to account for varied sub-groupings present within the whole" (p. 9). The metaphor also fails to account for interpersonal tension and dissonance when values and beliefs collide. Meyerson and Martin (1987) alluded to this when they suggested that

> there are shared networks within the organization and these are subject to change depending on the problems, issues, and players who choose to be involved. There is greater fluidity and inconsistency in the school's cultural groupings. This proposition contrasts with that of the collective culture assumption that there is school-wide consensus, consistent actions, and clarity of shared values (Enomoto, 1997, p. 10).

Enomoto concurred with Sergiovanni (1994b) in encouraging the community metaphor but called for an extended metaphor of "nested communities" within the whole rather than a fixed collective. He argued that "a nested communities construct takes into account 'members' understandings, interpretations, and actions because school values might not be commonly shared. Also, policies and practices might be at odds, and much is subject to negotiation within the nested communities of a school" (p. 11).

The discussion of the building community metaphor would not be complete without noting that for the purposes of this study, community is presented in its most positive light. Conversely, communities can also be manipulative and destructive. It is also clear that the definition of community is undergoing change as virtual communities emerge and shifts in demographics and economies occur.

Summary

The focus of this study is on the leadership of college presidents in a time of change and uncertainty. In particular, I was interested in how senior administrators built community when the government focus was on rationality and accountability. Additionally, I was interested in finding out to what extent the generic literature and research studies would be reflected in the participants' leadership stories.

In this review, I provided a brief examination of the literature on change which concluded that processes and relationship building are crucial for change to take place. I examined the literature on transactional and transformational leadership which highlighted the attitudes and values integral to leading change. I then presented the contemporary literature on leadership which emphasized the notion that leadership, as a role, can be shared among an organization's membership. This was also a view found in the subsequent literature on building community which placed an emphasis on the notions of shared values and responsibility, and the empowerment of others to meet personal and organizational goals.

Last, I acknowledged that building community is fundamentally a metaphor and therefore included a review of the metaphor, especially the notions of relationships,

choice, and the difference between formal and informal communities. I have also pointed out some of the weakness of the community metaphor.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

This chapter describes the methodology employed in this study. It includes the research design, selection of the participants, data collection, data analysis, reporting, trustworthiness, delimitations, assumptions, and limitations of the method and ethics procedures. The research design is in keeping with research that explores phenomena from an interpretive perspective.

Research Design

According to Glesne and Peshkin (1992) qualitative inquiry "generally searches for 'understanding of some phenomenon'" (p. 16). Qualitative inquiry is in alignment with the research topic being explored and my personal views of the world—that life is complex, ambiguous, and that for each of us our story is rooted in our own uniqueness and experience. The acceptance of diversity is an integral component of qualitative inquiry and the lenses through which I view the world. For Glesne and Peshkin (1992),

> The openness of qualitative inquiry allows the researcher to approach the inherent complexity of social interaction and to do justice to that complexity, to respect it in its own right. Qualitative researchers avoid simplifying social phenomena and instead explore the range of behavior and expand their understanding of the resulting interactions. (p. 7)

It was the exploration of being human—entering lives, developing relationships, hearing new perspectives, questioning, and learning from the experience of others that excited me. Qualitative research methodology provides flexibility, responsiveness, and a vehicle that is evolutionary in nature. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) noted that

> qualitative researchers deal with multiple, socially constructed realities or 'qualities' that are complex and indivisible into discrete variables, they regard their research task as coming to understand and interpret how the various participants in a social setting construct the world around them. (p. 6)

In a similar vein, Bolman and Deal (1994) maintained, "qualitative methods uncover the subtleties of how leaders think and how they frame their experience" (p. 199).

Concepts such as intuition, interpretation, and exploration are core to this study. The broad range of behaviors and the resulting complexities surrounding lived experiences can be best articulated using an interpretivist paradigm in which social interaction is the primary vehicle for sharing lived experiences. Geertz (1973) and Denzin (1988) suggested that interpretivism "is neither explanation nor prediction. It is interpretation, or the act of making sense out of a social interaction (cited in Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 19). Geertz (1973) defined interpretivism as "thick description . . . that goes beyond the mere or bare reporting of an act (thin description), but describes and probes intentions, motives, meanings, contexts, situation and circumstances of action" (cited in Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 19). Glesne and Peshkin further describe how interpretivists see the lived experience as not just cognitive but also emotional and that "every human situation is novel, emergent, and filled with multiple, often conflicting meanings and interpretations" (p. 19).

Interpretivist research design allows for these ambiguities through an open design that accommodates some degree of uncertainty, flexibility and elasticity. The elements of risk and responsiveness to hints within the evidence as to how the work will emerge are consistent with Guba and Lincoln's (1982) description of the interpretivist design as

"emerging as the inquiry proceeds, with each day's work being heavily dependent on what has gone before. Given their other postures, naturalists have no choice but to opt for an emergent (rolling, cascading, unfolding) design" (p. 245). According to Guba and Lincoln (1982),

> Within the naturalistic realm of inquiry there are multiple, intangible realities which can be studied only holistically (to dissociate the wholes is to alter them radically); inquiry into these multiple realities will inevitably diverge (each inquiry raises more questions than it answers) so that prediction and control are unlikely outcomes, although some level of understanding (*verstehen*) can be achieved. (pp. 237-238)

Most importantly, however, naturalist inquiry has the advantage of "offer[ing] a contextual relevance and richness unmatched by any other paradigm. It displays a sensitivity to process virtually excluded in paradigms stressing control and experimentation. . . . naturalistic approaches take full advantage of the not inconsiderable power of the human-as-instrument" (Guba & Lincoln, 1982, p. 235).

In keeping with the design of interpretive inquiry, I acted as the story collector of the lived experiences. It is was my role to question, observe, record, probe, and understand the participants' interpretations of their reality and to interpret through my understanding of their stories as they related to the research question. This required me to take some measure of caution throughout the process. While being empathetic to the participants, it was important that I examined and understood my subjectivity and limit my biasing of the data through my personal involvement (Glesne & Peshkin, p. 6). Therefore, I felt that it was imperative that I disclose my story since I could not be separated or removed from the process. In addressing this issue, Glesne and Peshkin indicated that the "goal is to get as fully as possible in touch with the embodied self who

performs the acts of research" (p. 106). Discussing what I brought to the research further underscores the cause and purpose of why I pursued a study of this nature.

The Researcher

As an active participant in a qualitative study, my educational background, life experiences, and the subjectivity of the investigation must be disclosed. Patton identified this as *Epoch* :

> The period in which the researcher must examine [himself] in order to identify personal biases and remove all traces of personal involvement in the phenomenon being studied. The purpose of this self-examination is for the researcher either to eliminate or to gain clarity from [his] own preconceptions, and it is part of the 'ongoing analytic process rather than a single fixed event'. (cited in Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 82)

Similarly, Glesne and Peshkin (1992) wrote, "the postmodern ethnographic perspective calls on researchers to not only describe their interpretations of social phenomena, but also explore their own contextual milieu and consider how the research process is shaping their inner feelings" (p. 11). This is also referred to as reflexivity.

Therefore, it is appropriate that I provide my story, a story that I acknowledge may itself function as both a constraint and facilitator in affecting the participants' ability to share their subjective stories. This intersubjectivity is a primary component of an interpretivist study that, at its core, is very dependent on the interaction and communication between individuals.

> Intersubjectivity is the escape from the confines of subjectivism through language to a process of communicative interaction. The more one attempts to explain one's experience the more will the speaker or writer move away from subjectivity and into intersubjectivity. The source aim of explaining to another is to draw on the common ground of language in

> such a way that experience can become shared meaning. (Valdes cited in Makaryk, 1997, p. 568)

The "common ground" described above begins with my experience as an educator, administrator and faculty member at an institution and member of the community in which I live and work as an artist. These experiences have enabled me to develop an appreciation for the complex and difficult role educational leaders have. They have also exposed me to the language of governance and the processes leaders engage in within the operation of a large organization. I have been able to observe, study, and reflect on the behavior of others. As a result, I was better prepared to communicate in a meaningful way with the participants of this study and therefore, the resulting narratives provided me with appropriate stories for interpretation, evaluation, reflection, and transformation.

Some of my experiential learning was also reflected in the discourse with the participants. This is in keeping with Wolcott's (1973) assertion that "a compelling point argued by many cultural anthropologists is that it is essential for the ethnographer to learn and use the language of the people he is studying" (p. 12).

It is my real-world experiences that motivated me to discover further understanding of leadership behavior, particularly at a higher level and in contrast to leadership as a department chair. This motivation is coupled with my background in the creative arts and therefore, I was also drawn to explore the notion of leadership as a creative activity.

Additionally I questioned what I believed leadership was. In my formative thinking I thought presidential leadership was about authority and control. I believed that presidents were authoritarians selected because of their ability to remove themselves

from the emotional toll associated with "making the call." I believed that presidents were singularly responsible for an organization's success and that they were the ones making all the difficult decisions. I thought they were visionaries, blessed with some magical power of seeing into the future. And, in other ways, they were mysterious persons who kept their "cards close to their chests." It is these assumptions that I wanted to challenge. Demystifying the role of president seemed an appropriate way to understand how leaders influence and shape the world around me. In seeking this, I thought that I could learn and grow as a professional and person, and therefore, I could contribute more to the organization for whom I work.

In contrast to these lived experiences, I also brought with me a degree of naiveté about how the study would proceed and what I would uncover. To that end, I also became a *learner* (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 80).

These experiences provided me the opportunity to reflect on what I have learned and what I brought to the study. They are the foundation from which the discussion and discourse for this study was built. Clearly then, the uniqueness and diversity of my experience combined with this methodology does not allow for replication of this study.

Participants

Guba and Lincoln (1982) pointed out that "humans are chosen as the instruments because of their greater insightfulness, their flexibility, their responsiveness, the holistic emphasis they can provide, their ability to utilize tacit knowledge, and their ability to process and ascribe meaning to data simultaneously with their acquisition" (p. 245). In keeping with this description and the nature of this study, volunteers were selected based

on their reputations, experiences, and ability to encourage internal leadership. Marshall and Rossman (1995) described them as

> the influential, the prominent, and the well-informed people in an organization or community and are selected for interviews on the basis of their expertise in areas relevant to the research. . . . Elites are also able to report on an organization's policies, past histories, and future plans, from a particular perspective. (p. 83)

Specifically, the participants were selected because of what we can learn from them and what they bring to the exploration; theoretically they were relevant participants who were willing to reflect and describe their experience, recall feelings, confront discomfort, and to tell their stories in a open and honest way (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). The participants were determined by examining data from the Alberta Colleges and Institutes Faculties Associations (ACIFA) climate surveys, contact with Advanced Learning, peer recommendations, and in consultation with my dissertation supervisor.

The primary criterion for participant selection was their role as president of an Alberta college, although I initially intended to interview two presidents from other provinces, the study was realigned to focus on the Alberta college sector based on my research committee's recommendation. The presidents were also chosen from verifiable evidence of their accomplishments such as leadership awards, organizational awards, the leaders' participation on non-college boards, strong results on institutional climate surveys, and examples articulated by other presidents and Alberta Learning. One participant withdrew on the day of the interview so another was found based on peer recommendation and some of the above criteria. This process was in keeping with networking techniques as described by Glesne and Peshkin (1992, p. 27).

The participants were encouraged to relate their feelings, both positive and negative ones, and to tell their "own" stories without censorship. I concluded that the selected participants were, in fact, willing to reflect and describe their experiences and that this elite group generated "rich" narratives.

The inherent value of this study required that participants be willing to have their thinking exposed and have their ideas and perceptions shared. Their identities are not revealed and they were given pseudonyms to enhance confidentiality and provide anonymity. In addition, respect for their privacy or any other concern that arose was treated with sensitivity, and measures were taken to ensure that the participants would not be negatively affected by the study. Because of the public position of these individuals, they were given multiple opportunities to review the data and analysis and delete any statement which might have identified them.

Data Collection

In an interpretivist study such as this the primary research instrument is the researcher. Therefore, truth in the research was dependent on my ability to bring into alignment my interpretations of what I was hearing with those being interviewed. To ensure the accuracy of my observations, I employed the following three methods as story gathering tools: a personal journal, organizational and personal documentation, and recorded interviews.

Ellan (1984) addressed a newer interpretation of the meaning of data collection as it pertains to a research design such as this with the following:

> It used to be that ethnographic “facts” were “collected,” realities were “perceived,” and data “presented.” The current view is more of one in which lived “experiences” are “transformed” into data through encounters between researcher and researched; they are “translated” from one cultural context to another, and they are “constructed” drawing upon the personal and intersubjectivities of those involved. (cited in Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 11)

In this study, I remained responsive and flexible. However, I did adhere to particular strategies to assist with the construction of the hermeneutic circle and interpretations of the stories. They are described in the following section.

Personal Journal

Regular entries into an electronic journal were made to provide an account of my subjective interpretations of events as well as a record of objective information such as contact dates and schedule of events. However, the journal focused more on the subjective matters that pertained to my perceptions of the interviews and occurrences surrounding them. The journal was an instrument that assisted me in following my story and noting particular aspects of the participants’ stories. In addition, the journal allowed me to return and review my initial impressions and continue the reflective process. This revisiting of the journal also assisted me with the analysis of the data (Guba and Lincoln, 1982).

As a matter of efficiency and regularity, entries were tape recorded and transcribed at a later date. This process enabled me to be more fluid, reflexive, and immediate in my descriptions to tape. Subsequently, I revisited these observations and added further

reflections of the feelings, emotions, and events that were central to the narrative in the journal.

Interviews

The primary source of data for this study was the interviews. I anticipated interviewing each participant two times, but once was sufficient given their desire to share their stories. This was clearly evident in the richness of the data. The interviews ranged from one to three hours. These interviews were conducted on site and included tours of the institutions to get a sense of their organizational cultures coupled with casual conversations with numerous employees.

The first objective for the on-site interviews was to establish a strong rapport and trusting relationship. I also encouraged the participants to communicate in an open and honest manner.

The questioning of the participants included structured, open-ended, and depth-probing questions. According to Glesne and Peshkin (1992) the intent of this strategy is to

> capture the unseen that was, is, will be, or should be; how respondents think or feel about something; and how they explain or account for something. Such a broad-scale approach to understanding is drawn from the assumption that qualitative research, notably nonreductionist, is directed to understanding phenomena in their fullest possible complexity. The elaborated responses you hear provide the affective and cognitive underpinnings of your respondents' perceptions. (p. 92)

The participants were given the following questions in advance of the interviews. This provided them the opportunity to think about an area they wished to explore or focus on.:

- Could you please describe for me your leadership philosophy?
- Can you identify any leadership or organizational literature that has influenced how you conduct your leadership role?
- What are the core values and beliefs of your organization?
- Can you describe for me your thoughts on what building community means?
- How have you nurtured a sense of community in your organization?
- What do you perceive to be the leader's role in building community?
- What have been your major successes and disappointments with respect to building a sense of community?
- What major challenges, related to building community, are currently at the forefront of your thinking?
- How do you bridge the gap between those that embrace change and those that fear it?
- What is your process for actualizing an organization's vision and how is it articulated?
- Does the organization's vision undergo a metamorphosis over time? If so, how are new ideas incorporated into the process?
- Are there strategies, processes, actions and/or situations which have increased the frequency of success?
- What external factors have had an impact on the process?

- If you could choose one idea or strategy as being the most important for building community, what would that be?

Furthermore, these questions were used to set the stage for the interviews. The participants used these questions as a guide throughout the interviews and responded spontaneously to them. However, not all of the questions were addressed by each participant since other questions surfaced through the course of the interviews that were more relevant to the participants' unique contexts.

The interviews were audio-taped, with the participants' approval, and transcribed as soon as possible after the interviews. The transcripts were then reviewed with the recording to ensure their accuracy. I then compared my recorded impressions from my journal with those that appeared in the transcript. This process also allowed me to respond and modify my interviewing technique as the study proceeded. This is referred to as "praxis" or reflection plus action (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 11). These strategies are also consistent with those described by Measor (1985), Weber (1986), and Winter (1989).

Documents

The participants were asked to supply relevant College publications, media reviews, videos, and/or other documents that discussed their work or their organization. These documents provided a secondary source of data and allowed me to prepare for the interviews and assisted me in the analysis by providing me with additional sources for examination of ideas and experiences described by the participants (Owens, 1982; Winter, 1989).

Data Analysis

Polkinghorne (1989), cited in Rudestam and Newton (1992), argued that "when phenomenology is applied to research the focus is on what the person experiences in a language that is as loyal to the lived experience as possible" (p. 33). The lived experiences of the participants were elicited through the interview process generating mini-narratives, in the form of "popular 'stories', legends, fragmented creative snippets of wisdom, and 'petite histoire' (little stories)" (Rosenau, 1992, p. 84). These narratives provided data for analysis and interpretation.

The analysis of the data ran concurrently with data gathering and appears in preliminary form in the journal. After each interview I recorded my impressions of the interview; how I felt about the interview and how the interview may have felt for the participants. I recorded ideas that caught my attention, and I raised additional questions that provided guidance in my analysis. I commented on the differences and similarities in leadership styles and on the anecdotes the participants shared. I also commented on how their stories fit with what I had read about leadership, the Alberta college system, and the community metaphor. Furthermore, I reflected on what I had said and what I may have omitted during the interview experience. I then transcribed the tape for entry into the journal.

My experiences were recorded and reported to my supervisor as the study proceeded. This consultation provide co-direction in terms of the required responsiveness of the study. New directions emerged from this consultation with respect to the relevancy of the data and the incorporation of additional literature.

Initially, I thought that I had failed to bring to the surface sufficient data related to the study. I then listened to the taped interviews again. This exercise offered an additional opportunity to recheck the accuracy of the transcripts and, revisit and question my initial interpretations. I recognized that there was more to these interviews than I had initially thought.

Furthermore, I realized that the presidents, while engaging and honest, were conscious of their public position and their stories were self-censored; negativism was non-existent. It wasn't until we engaged in "off-the-record," informal dialogue that I experienced a deeper, more emotionally-charged communication. This indicated to me that I had developed a high level of trust with the participants. The informal stories contained much interesting and applicable information that penetrated further into their humanness. However, while these conversations assisted me in understanding the participants' motivations and commitments, I have respected their privacy, and the privacy of those individuals mentioned, and therefore did not include these candid conversations in the study.

I also examined additional public documentation that supported the participants' interpretations of their experiences. I found, in cases where documentation was available or provided, the stories were in alignment with what the leaders stated.

Furthermore, the interpretive process of the data began with my developing a draft thematic analysis in which I framed the leaders explanations and insights into five principal themes: speaking the organization, an enterprise orientation, political nuances, leadership transparency, and distributed leadership. The thematic analysis was then shared with the respondents. According to Glesne and Peshkin (1992), this process

provides participants the opportunity to "(1) verify that you have reflected the insider's perspectives; (2) inform you of sections, that if published, could be problematic for either personal or political reasons; and (3) help you to develop new ideas and interpretations" (p. 147). They further commented that "by sharing working drafts, both researcher and researched may grow in their interpretations of the phenomena around them" (p. 147).

Reporting

The reporting of the data proved to be a major challenge. The shear volume of data required that I edit and focus on those ideas expressed that related directly to the purpose of the study. Hence, not all of the data are included.

Initially, I attempted to organize the reporting section using specific topics that emerged. After spending a great deal of time trying to formulate a structure that captured these topics, I decided that the participants' storytelling was too unique, their organizational demographics, environments, and cultures far too different, and their personal leadership experiences too diverse to merge their portraits. Therefore, I decided to report each participant's story individually. The form I decided on was derived from the questions in the interview process in combination with major topics in the literature review. This parallel structure uses a four section format. First, the participants' leadership orientation: their organizational contexts, leadership influences, and central leadership theme on which they focused. Second, I report the leaders' stories on creating a shared vision. Third, I report the meanings the leaders placed on the metaphor of building community. Last, I report on the challenges leaders noted specific to their environments and the Alberta College system. This approach of "narrowing and

expanding the focus" is supported by Glesne and Peshkin (1992). In expanding on this idea, they further suggested that this reporting technique is "like a zoom lens, the text glides through various levels of generality. . . . [They] range from universal statements about human beings and their cultural environmental situation to incident-specific statements (Spradley, 1997). (Cited in Glesne and Peshkin, 1994, p. 164)

The findings are reported largely in the words of the participants. They were articulate and showed passion for what they were doing. They provided stories rich in experience and ideas relevant to the study.

I corrected grammatical errors in the transcriptions of the interviews. Idiosyncrasies such as: ums, ahs, I think, and repeated wording were deleted for readability. Each transcription was electronically sent to the participants for review. They were asked to ensure the transcript was a true representation of what they had said and, as per ethical guidelines, were given the opportunity to delete any data they were uncomfortable sharing.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is "the standard upon which [the research] is likely to be judged" (Rudestam & Newton, 1992, p. 77). It is therefore important that I took measures to ensure that the nature of the research is believable and has credibility. Guba and Lincoln (1981) identified credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability as the four main criteria for establishing the trustworthiness of a study.

Credibility

In a study such as this, asking participants to share their stories and answer questions is simply not enough. To maximize the credibility and minimize bias, I asked the participants to check the transcripts and my interpretations. This meant that I was in contact with the participants for over a year and found supplementary communications invaluable in checking information and obtaining further confirmation of the analysis. This is in keeping with Guba and Lincoln (1982) suggestion that "naturalists can ask those people whether their realities have been represented appropriately" (p. 246). In addition, consultations with my supervisor coupled with self reflection limited my biases and subjectivity from entering the interpretations. This is in keeping with Glesne and Peshkin's (1992) observation that "continual alertness to your own biases, your own subjectivity, also assists in producing more trustworthy interpretations" (pp. 146-147).

Credibility was further enhanced by pre-interview examination of appropriate documentation, videos, television interviews, media reviews, articles, and other relevant sources.

Transferability

The very nature of this interpretivist study proposes that the reader(s) of this study are able to transfer the experiences discussed to their own contexts. The narrative provided, I maintain, is "thick" in description of the participants' experiences and processes. The amount of transferability remains to be seen. Only the reader can determine if the text is truly transferable.

Dependability

Although this study cannot be replicated in this way, steps were taken to ensure the accuracy of the data. First, I made multiple checks regarding the accuracy of the transcription. I also had a colleague review the audio recording and transcription to further ensure its accuracy. Second, I asked the participants to verify the transcriptions, make clarifications, and delete sensitive material. Third, I studied the data over a long period of time. Multiple readings allowed for the checking and rechecking of the accuracy of the text, and at the same time compare it to other documentation. This prolonged engagement with the research data assisted me in working towards a more objective analysis through conscientious reflection on the interviews, documentation, and the journal account.

Confirmability

In the interpretivist paradigm, confirmability relates to the extent the author provided a reasonable analysis of the data. Hence, I sent transcriptions and interpretations to the participants for review. In addition, colleagues read the data and saw it as believable of college presidents. Marshall and Rossman (1995) indicated that confirmability captures the traditional concept of objectivity (p. 145). The outcome of this research was not predictable; steps were taken, however, to work toward a more objective analysis through conscientious reflection on the interviews, documentation, the journal account and through the aforementioned activity of member checks.

From a broader perspective, I engaged in careful listening and have made every effort to ensure that I honored those means described above.

Assumptions and Limitations

The research was designed on the assumption that the process would reveal insights related to the questions being asked. I assumed that I would be able to establish and build a rapport that encouraged the participants to communicate in an open and honest manner and that they were willing to share and have their stories told. I assumed that the participants had suitable and relevant experience, were knowledgeable in their fields, and could provide narratives that are rich with information, coupled with a clarity in language that is easily interpretable. I assumed that by agreeing to participate, the individuals were willing to provide the requested documents and media to support and facilitate the interpretive process. Last, I assumed that the participants' stories would contribute to the body of knowledge on college leadership.

Marshall and Rossman (1995) provided further insight into studies that search for a deeper understanding of the lived experience when they wrote:

> one critical assumption follows Thomas's (1949) proposition that, in the study of human experience, it is essential to know how people define their situations: "If men [sic] define situations as real, they are real in their consequences." (p. 40)

The participants' stories are rooted in their truths and the lenses through which they individually view their worlds. The participants' truths lie in their experience and it is their experience that became the basis for theory and knowledge within this study. An all-encompassing truth about the research question is not the purpose of this study. I intended only to raise further awareness of the specific question explored.

Additionally, I offered the participants the opportunity to benefit from the experience by being asked questions for which they previously may not have had an

audience, and provided them with the opportunity to examine and reflect on their knowledge, experience, and understanding of community. However, I was limited by my experience and ability to develop a meaningful relationship with the participants. This affected how much each participant was willing to share and reflect collaboratively. Although I had no evidence of this, some participants may have shared less because I was not a fellow senior administrator.

Furthermore, all research is bound by the values of the researcher and the participants. My role then, was that of a facilitator, guide, and interpreter while the participants' role was that of co-researchers. This recognition, elucidation, and acceptance of subjective truths imparted the work with epistemological integrity.

Specifically then, the study examined the attitudes, beliefs, experiences, and perceptions of leaders who embraced change and engaged in creating an organizational vision and building community with others.

Ethics Procedures

As the researcher, I had an ethical responsibility to respect the participants and safeguard their privacy. As volunteers for the study, they reserved the right to censor any stories that they deemed inappropriate for dissemination or drop out at anytime; confidences were respected. As the researcher, it was also my responsibility to clearly and accurately discuss with them the purpose of the study and how the information was to be presented and used prior to their acceptance of participation. Before the interviews took place a twelve point "cover story," as described by Glesne and Peshkin (1982), was

outlined, presented and discussed. A letter of consent was signed by each participant and a copy given to the participant.

Furthermore, a completed *Department of Educational Policy Studies Research Ethics Review Application* was submitted for scrutiny and was approved by the *Ethics Review Committee*. This was to ensure that this study did not violate any ethical standards set by the institution or that I would bring harm to the participants. The participants' wishes always took priority throughout the process and they were free to withdraw at anytime without prejudice.

The data were securely locked in a file cabinet when not being examined by myself. Computer files were locked and required a password for access. Printed drafts of chapters were shredded immediately after use. I removed the names of participants and substituted pseudonyms before the data were transcribed so that the individuals were not identifiable to the transcriber. To ensure confidentiality, I labeled them in sequence:

College A—Anderson

College B—Brown

College C—Campbell

College D—Douglas

College E—Edwards

The transcriber also signed a *Respect for Confidentiality* statement to ensure that all information provided would remain confidential and all data would be returned to me and computer files deleted.

Postscript

In using this methodology I acknowledge the strengths and weaknesses of this study. Knowing these provided me with a high level of comfort and an appropriate degree of cautiousness in the process. Both contributed and ultimately led to a more meaningful and successful study.

In developing this study. I took steps to review the relevant literature and to establish some form of consistency with what has gone before. The purpose of the study was to develop an understanding of how the participants constructed their worlds and made sense of their understanding of leadership and the building community metaphor. As a consequence of looking at different realities, certain aspects of the research methodology emerged as it proceeded. Uncertainty, ambiguity, and risk underlined the research but all, in the end, contributed to the discovery of knowledge. This open design allowed the research to flow and thus become those things which could not have been predicted or described in the research proposal.

CHAPTER 4

The Research Setting

In this chapter, I establish a context for the presentation of data by providing historical and contemporary information about community colleges. I begin with a brief history of the college sector in Alberta followed by a description of emerging challenges and suggested strategies specific to the sector. An examination of the leadership crisis in the sector continues the contextual discussion. The chapter ends with a brief look at the college governance model and a general overview of demographic data about the participating institutions.

A Brief History of the College Sector in Alberta

Confidentiality and anonymity of participants in this study, as prescribed by ethical requirements, does not allow for detailed descriptions of the colleges studied. With this in mind, a general overview is presented rather than specific histories of each college studied.

In *Access to Opportunity, 1905—80*, Berghofer and Vladicka (1980) provided a comprehensive examination of the history of post-secondary education in Alberta. Specifically, I draw upon their chapter, *A Chronological Outline of the Development of Post-Secondary Education in Alberta* (pp. 70-73), to present a condensed account of the college sector and relevant events.

The college sector began in 1903 with the founding, by the Methodist Church, of the first institution of higher education in Alberta: Alberta College. After the formation of the Province of Alberta in 1905, colleges were founded in Calgary in 1912 and Olds in

1913. The Calgary college was closed in 1915 while Olds College remains today as one of the leading agricultural colleges in the province.

Mount Royal College opened as a private school in 1931 to provide a two-year university transfer. The college was affiliated with the University of Alberta and was the first true 'junior' college in Alberta. In 1951, Fairview School was established as the second provincial school of agriculture. It would later close and reopen as a college with an expanded mandate in 1960.

A significant shift to expand college mandates from university transfer to include adult education was made in 1956. A Department of Education policy statement initiated this shift; consequently, Lethbridge Junior College was established in 1957 to enhance access to education in that region.

In 1958, the *Public Junior Colleges Act* outlined a more comprehensive role for colleges. This coupled with the 1959 *Report of the Royal Commission on Education in Alberta*, led to the establishment of additional local colleges to decentralize technical and vocational education, although their primary focus would remain university transfer. The colleges were instituted in direct response to pressures on adult education and took place throughout the sixties. The Calgary institute was renamed the Southern Institute of Technology (1960) in Calgary, and the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology in Edmonton began operating in 1962 to met the increased demand for vocational and technical training. Red Deer College was established in 1964, followed by Medicine Hat (1965), Grande Prairie (1966), and the transformation of a private institution into a public junior college—Mount Royal College (1966)—by act of the provincial legislature.

The *Public Junior Colleges Act* (1958) was replaced with the *Colleges Act* in 1969. This led to further changes in mandates as Berghofer and Vladicka (1980) indicated, "[the Act] completely revamped the administration and financing mechanism for the public colleges, and reiterated the government's policy favoring comprehensive college programming" (p. 34). Included in this legislation was the implementation of Board of Governors, appointed by government, as the acting authority for college governance. Previously, the public school boards administered the colleges.

Wood (1991) further noted that the *Colleges Act* reduced the authority that universities had over transfer programming; and "sections 18-20 established a mechanism for the possible future transfer of the provincially administered agricultural colleges, technical institutes and vocational centres to the public college sector by order of the Lieutenant Governor in Council" (p. 99). The term "Junior" was then dropped from college titles.

In 1970, the government position paper on post-secondary education outlined plans for the decentralization of services and support for the implementation of comprehensive college curricula. Grant McEwan Community College and AVC Grouard and Community Vocational colleges were established. The terms "Agricultural" and "Vocational" were dropped from Fairview, Olds, and Vermilion Colleges. The administration of these colleges was transferred from the Department of Agriculture to the newly created Department of Advanced Education. Vermilion College was transformed into a public institution called Lakeland College in 1975 while Fairview, Keyano (formerly Alberta Vocational Centre), and Olds would do the same in 1978. All colleges in Alberta were now board-governed.

By the 1980s, the public college sector mandate continued to expand beyond the university transfer and career diploma programming to include apprenticeship and specialized programs. Hence, the Alberta College of Art was established in 1985.

By this time, adult upgrading and university transfer program enrollments constituted only a small portion of college enrollments. Wood (1991) indicated that these "programs constituted 14 and 12 percent respectively (Alberta Advanced Education, n.d., p. 78)" of total enrollments (p. 100). He also noted that three colleges did not offer university transfer programs and "apprenticeship programs became an important part of college programming in the 1980s in most institutions outside of Edmonton and Calgary" (p. 100).

Expansion of trades' training in colleges continued throughout the 1980s and two new technical schools were introduced in Edmonton and Calgary. Educational funding was increased via the Alberta Heritage Foundation, Advancement Education Endowment Fund, Educational Opportunity Equalization Grants, and Assistance Grants each improving college funding and student access.

The *Universities Act* was also amended in the 1990s to allow public colleges to enter into degree-granting agreements with universities, which further expanded their original mandate of two-year university transfer agreements. Increases in funding continued until 1994 when the Alberta Minister of Advanced Education published *New Directions,* which outlined the need for increased accessibility, improved responsiveness, greater affordability, and more accountability. Innovation, flexibility, and effectiveness were the prescription for countering growing government costs of education. The Government also reduced base funding for colleges by 21 percent and implemented

accountability measures in conjunction with growth reward envelopes. In his communiqué to Alberta Colleges and Technical Institutes, Minister Jack Ady wrote:

> As you know, the government is committed to balancing the budget by 1996-97. This will require all sectors to work within reduced government grants. The reduction for each institution over the three-year period will be 11% in 1994-95, 7% in 1995-96 and 3% in 1996-97. . . . No funds will be provided for new capital construction in the next three years. . . . $47 million of the grant reduction across the system will be used to establish an Access Fund over the next three years to increase opportunities for student enrolment by 10,000. . . . We will also be introducing a new funding formula that will reward institutional efficiency and effectiveness. The department will work with institutions to implement this by 1996-97. The work on key performance indicators will be a key element in developing a formula. (January 28, 1994, pp. 1-3)

In summary, community colleges in Alberta have undergone a significant shift in their purposes and missions from their beginnings in the early 1900s. The college sector began with a mandate for agricultural training. This mandate expanded to include university transfer in the early 1930s. Further broadening occurred in the 1960s including the addition of adult education, vocational training, and career diplomas. Apprenticeship programs were added in the 1980s and degree-granting agreements with universities in the 1990s. Dougherty (1994) and Cohen and Brawer (1996) provided the following current state of affairs regarding the broadening of community college mandates:

> Many colleges that originated as primarily transfer institutions and then expanded to vocational and occupational programs have added continuing education, developmental activities, and community service since the 1970s. The result is that most comprehensive two-year colleges are incredibly complex, with a multitude of courses, programs, certificates, and degree offerings in everything from basic literacy to automotive repair to knitting to college-level calculus.
> (cited in Brewer, 1999, April, p. 2)

Provincially, this broadening of mandates was accomplished with graduated increases in funding until the mid 1990s when government oil revenues dropped and funding curtailments and accountability measures were initiated in response to a government decision to balance the provincial budget.

Some of the other challenges that relate to fiscal pressures and changing mandates, are described by the research and writings specific to the college sector in the next section.

Emerging Challenges for the College Sector

Much has been written about change in the community college sector in recent years (for example: Bailey & Averianova, 1998; Brewer, 1999; Dougherty & Bakia, 1999; Harrison 2001; McFarlin, Crittenden & Ebbers, 1999; Orr, 1999; Rosenfeld, 1998 & 1999; and Shults 2001). These authors raised several issues that are currently affecting the way colleges operate and are governed. Of these, I present issues surrounding the debate of the changing role and purpose of community colleges. The discussion then moves to possible approaches and stratagems for dealing with college sector change.

Conflicts and Challenges

In keeping with the previously identified changes in the mandates and activities of the college sector, Dougherty and Bakia (1999) noted that colleges are being taken “in a very new direction: from an institution focused on training students to one that is centered on meeting the needs of business and the economy” (p. 1). They suggested that movement toward what they called, “the new economic role” or “economic planner,”

requires further examination as to the extent colleges "undercut their effectiveness at such traditional and still important roles as baccalaureate preparation and remedial education" (pp. 97-98). They also proposed that corporations may be engaging in "corporate welfare" when publicly funded institutions provide training for the employer which otherwise would have to be offered in-house (p. 98).

Rosenfeld (1998) elaborated on the dissonance occurring in colleges when he identified two major challenges. First he argued that

> since the core funding of most community colleges is tied to full-time equivalent enrollments that reflect student choices not local needs—which may not be currently popular among youth—the college may not be able to reach the critical mass needed to develop or acquire that expertise and technology needed by a set of regional industries. (p. 32)

His second concern was also for the amount of external influence brought to bear on the quality and central role of college education. Rosenfeld argued that "the liberal aims of education as the unfolding of the individual's mind. . . . is undermined when unduly influenced by private interests" (pp. 32-33).

Brewer (1999) took the view that

> the existence of such diverse programs—the faculty that teach them and the students they serve—is a source of both strength and weakness; it is also the focus of much heated debate. On the one hand, community colleges—as the name suggests—have always felt an obligation to serve their communities. (p. 1)

As a consequence, he argued, "the many tasks undertaken by community colleges lead to a lack of clear purpose, tensions among faculty and students who are separated along programmatic lines, and resources spread too thin" (p. 2). His summary data concluded

that "the development of ever more new activities has resulted in fragmentation of purpose and dissatisfaction with the status quo" (p. 26).

Multiple missions, comprehensiveness, and responsiveness to community needs, particularly during periods of fiscal restraint, deepens the debate. Bailey and Averianova (1998) noted, "critics suggest that the colleges have lost their way, abandoning missions that should form the foundation of a democratic society, and squandering effort and resources in an attempt to 'be all things to all people'" (p. 1). Furthermore, they raised the issue of

> more restricted budgets have already put pressures on the colleges and indeed, the discussion of multiple missions often takes place in the context of fiscal pressure—should funds be spent on a new transfer guidance center or hiring staff to solicit training contract from local businesses? Inefficient efforts to pursue too many goals may waste much of this money. (p. 1)

While this pressure may be one of the arguments that "draw resources away from traditional core activities," Bailey and Averianova conveyed that "despite limited resources or the assumption [thereof], community colleges introduce new programs or functions precisely because they are expected to generate new revenues" (p. 18). They further argued that, "even in an era of public fiscal restraint, [expansion] does not necessarily imply that traditional activities will lose resources" (p. 19). They conceded, however, that "the growing effort to integrate academic and vocational education. . . . could potentially be blurred" (p. 12).

Harrison (2001) also noted several challenges that broadening missions carried with them. He indicated three primary concerns: First, there is an "inherent conflict [of] being inclusive and still getting the work done." Second, "project work is different from

academic work." Third, "institutional and community momentum is difficult to maintain over time." He elaborated on the latter when he raised the question, "Should the project conform to the college, or should the college conform to the project" (p. 2)?

Three major trends, according to Rosenfeld (1999), have contributed to the challenge of expanding community college missions. He suggested that the increase and improvements in the technology sector require higher-level training. This is coupled with increased demands from small and large companies. Finally, he recognized the "increasing expectations and demands among parents and youth for postsecondary education—apparently either regardless or unaware of the income and employment potential of many mid-skilled jobs and regardless of college readiness" (p. 1).

From a broader perspective, Rosenfeld identified eight characteristics that make community colleges different from other post-secondary educational institutions and that these characteristics "influence the range of and priorities among services, programs, and missions and the associated student and economic outcomes and impacts" (p. 1):

1) Community colleges serve a much broader range of student populations.

2) Community colleges have a different relationship to their local economies and thus different customers and missions.

3) Community colleges operate in different competitive environments.

4) The rapid growth of private companies is driving more and more community colleges toward increasing their short-term and certificate programs.

5) Community college programs, curricula, and enrollments are driven by different forces. Community college vocational curricula can be shaped more directly by employer needs, industry skill standards, and economic development plans and strategies.

6) Community colleges serve different customers.

7) Community colleges exhibit greater variations among states and within states than do high schools.

8) Community colleges are freer to respond to changing economies and labor markets. (pp. 4-8)

In support of these, Lorenzo (2001) suggested that "there is strong evidence that communities are becoming more dissimilar—economically, demographically, politically, culturally" and this results in "growing differences among colleges with more difficulty in framing a uniform definition, setting a common agenda, or envisioning a single mission" (p. 5). He further observed that "mature organizations often begin to place their own preferences ahead of the needs which prompted their creation" (p. 4). In addition to these Lorenzo suggested that "students' goals may not be well aligned with society's needs" and that differences among students are expanding while the "interests of multiple constituencies drive multiple and sometimes conflicting definitions of success" (p. 8). Lorenzo also touched on the effect advancement in technologies has on the college system and proposed that "technology will transform our concept of teaching and learning much faster than many predict" (p. 7).

From another perspective, Mittelstet and de los Santos (1997) argued that "many community colleges find it difficult to connect with their external communities in meaningful ways" (p. 1). They suggest that the "primary reasons for this struggle externally may well be that many of these same institutions lack a strong sense of internal community" (p. 1). They identified three key reasons why this may be so

> (1) frequently our students are on campus for their classes only before or after rushing to jobs or from family; (2) most of our colleges are without

> residence halls, eliminating the opportunity for students to build community through a true living/learning situation; and (3) most of our students only take a few classes before moving onto a job or a university, and thus never feel the sense of belonging that programs or college activities provide. (p. 1)

While the debate over the changing role of community colleges continues, some of the authors presented here and other researchers have offered strategies on how colleges and the college system as a whole might respond.

Lorenzo (2001) argued that "colleges and schools are social institutions and should place society's needs and wishes ahead of their own. . . . Community colleges should 'mirror' the communities they were created to serve" (pp. 4-5). While the 'open door' may be a "hallmark of the community college, and positions them as 'the peoples' colleges'. . . . options, pathways, and choices may need to be limited, open access to the institution itself must remain universal" (p. 6).

In keeping with being responsive to community needs, Rosenfeld (1999) suggested that "new programs can be introduced more easily and quickly and customized to local technical skill needs" (p. 8). He elaborated,

> The 'reactive' colleges survey labor market trends and employer needs and then orient programs towards those trends and needs. The 'proactive' colleges anticipate demands and needs based on patterns of technological changes and knowledge of current best practices and then act as systems integrator and modernizer by providing a work force prepared for the future along with help in making improvements. Colleges historically have been reactive, but the new economy is increasingly looking to colleges to be catalysts for improvement within firms. (p. 22)

Orr (1999) suggested that with an increase and focus on workforce preparation, colleges' roles should expand to include collaborations with secondary schools. In his

study, which examined four community colleges that formed school collaborations, he concluded that new and relatively unexplored collaboration can yield additional resources and reinforce the collaborative effort (p. 44). In a similar vein, Harrison (2001) suggested that organizations should “find the right partners, and act quickly if you find the wrong partner. . . Leverage existing initiatives and seek out relationships among other innovative projects” (p. 5). He added the condition, “be prepared to spend money on staffing, curriculum, marketing, labs and technology” (p. 5).

Regarding the issue of faculty division over academic versus vocational training, Brewer (1999) made the suggestion that “given changing student demographics, demand for noncredit activities is likely to continue to grow, and colleges may need to figure out ways to integrate regular full-time faculty into these efforts” (p. 26).

Dougherty and Bakia (1999) argued that “boards and administrators need to consider ways of insuring that [colleges] continue to grow” and that “it is crucial that community colleges retain the ethos of educational institutions and not come to see themselves as just another training provider” (p. 99). Furthermore, they argued that “policy makers need to craft policies that provide incentives to community college administrators to maintain vigorous baccalaureate-preparation and remedial-education programs” and ensure that “these policies are strongly oriented to serving the needs of disadvantaged populations” (p. 99).

While much of the writings focused on building external community—creating partnerships and supporting external economic trends—Mittelstet and de los Santos (1997) argued that external success begins with internal success, and organizations should “enjoy the process of building community together and celebrate success” while

embracing and "building on the strengths of diversity" (p. 3). They suggested "taking the steps and the risks necessary to build community from the inside out" (p. 3). They further noted that "creating and sustaining strong internal community requires reflection, planning, implementation, and evaluation. The result of this methodical community building process will be what appears to others as a spontaneously celebrative and naturally supportive organizational culture" (p. 3).

While much of the research focused on localized strategies, Rosenfeld (1998) took a system-wide perspective for dealing with the many challenges in the community college sector. He identified six developmental strategies for government. Although they are taken from the United States context, they may well be worth considering and transferring to a provincial context. They are

1) The state system can analyze the industrial composition of its regional economies and examine existing strengths of the colleges to determine which clusters may require [attention] and which could benefit from special attention, what types of skills they will require, and which colleges might best serve those industries.

2) The system can allow and even offer incentives to colleges for establishing semi-autonomous centers and for employing faculty from industry, and it can reward faculty for relationships with industry and consulting as well as teaching.

3) The state can make it easier to justify new programs—allowing more flexibility in enrollment levels and completion rates—that take into account the dynamic nature or strategic importance of the cluster.

4) The state can allow greater flexibility in faculty requirements and compensation in order to attract staff with experience.

5) The state system might provide greater support for programs and services that can demonstrate industry involvement, interest, and matching resources.

6) Colleges can work more closely with high schools to attract students into the programs by helping to acquaint them with the industries as they operate today and not as they have in the past. (pp. 33-34)

In summary, I present Bailey's and Averianova's (1998) observation that

> no other institution has demonstrated so much flexibility in adapting to the community's needs. . . . Community colleges are probably not going to significantly restrict their activities. There is too much enthusiasm and political support for many of their new functions. (pp. 28-29)

While the focus of the debate has been on the complexities and emerging trends of the college sector, there is an growing leadership crisis that further complicates meeting these challenges.

Leadership Crisis

A leadership crisis in the American college sector has been identified. Hahn noted that "in issue after issue of the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, we read of another troubled presidency, another leader worn down or driven out, in distress or under fire" while Fisher and Koch (1996) stated, "it is generally agreed today that the college presidency, once the site of many such powerful, effective, and inspirational leaders, has decayed and all too frequently now is a refuge for ambivalent, risk-averting individuals who seek to offend no one, and as a consequence arouse and motivate no one" (cited in McFarlin, Crittenden & Ebbers, 1999, p. 19). They further noted that there has been a 30% turnover rate every 2 years and that the average presidential tenure is 5 to 7 years.

Shults (2001) supported this and added that "forty-five percent of current presidents plan to retire by 2007" and that "community college presidents are getting older. In 1986,

their average age was 51; in 1998, it was 57" (p. 1). He further observed, "not only are community colleges losing faculty leaders, administrative leaders, and current CEOs, but because people in the traditional leadership pipeline are aging and retiring, the future of presidential leadership is in a state of uncertainty" (p. 2).

While the crisis is clear, the question remains: if leaders are to facilitate change and be responsive, what should the college sector be looking for in terms of leadership to fill the anticipated presidential shortage?

Shults (2001) referred to an American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) 2001 on-line survey which indicated that "future presidents will need an even more entrepreneurial spirit, a greater command of technology, and a more adaptive approach than presidents need today" (p. 8). This is supported by McFarlin, Crittenden, and Ebbers (1992) in their study examining background factors common among outstanding community college presidents. They studied 96 presidents, who were identified by other presidents from 718 participants, as outstanding leaders in the community college system. Their results indicated a positive relationship between the following factors:

> (a) completion of a terminal degree, (b) study of higher education and community college leadership, (c) scholarly publishing and presentations, (d) preparation as an agent of change, (e) status as a community college "insider," (f) following nontraditional paths to the presidency, (g) participating as a protégé in a mentor-protégé relationship, (h) using peer networks—particularly those based on community college work environments and relationships established in a graduate program, and (i) knowledge of contemporary technology. (p. 29)

In a similar vein, Vaughan and Weisman (1998) maintained that "although there is no specific blueprint for college leadership, certain skills have been identified as

important for effective presidents." They include "the ability to bring a college together in the governing process; the ability to mediate; having a good command of technology; maintaining a high level of tolerance for ambiguity; understanding and appreciating multiculturalism; and the ability to build coalitions" (cited in Shults, 2001, p. 8).

Although there is no evidence to suggest that a leadership crisis is emerging in the Alberta college sector, one could infer there may well be an impending crisis as the pressures of comprehensiveness, diversity, and reduced funding mount. A recent on-line survey of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) web site indicated that there were three presidential positions available from a possible fifteen colleges. If the research is correct, we would expect the sector to experience similar difficulties. This then raises the question of how colleges will deal with the issue of leadership succession. While leadership succession is one issue, the complex structure of college governance offers other potential problems.

College Governance

Community building, as argued earlier, is contextual. Different environments have different missions, values, purposes, cultures, and policies that guide their operations. The collegial model, which is core to public institutions, has unique system attributes that differ greatly from private organizations. They contain three distinct groups or "nested" communities (Enomoto, 1997) that operate under very different rules.

Public organizations are governed by a Board of Governors primarily made up of government appointed public members. This board, in conjunction with senior administration, assesses the "big picture" and sets goals accordingly. The group adheres

to government mandates, legislation, and financial resources. A second group, the professionals, are guided by their association's collective agreements and constitutions. Similarly, the third group, the support staff, are subject to their own collective agreements. All three, however, are subject to an institutional policies' umbrella.

This then provides opportunity for a natural confrontational "us versus them" mindset. The difficulty in building community is clearly evident when not all of the groups are reading from the same "play book" and when motivations for authoring these books are very different and often in conflict. Add to this the major constraints of financial resources, the high cost of technology, and the unpredictability of enrollments and the result is a highly-complex and challenging leadership paradox. This, however, is the reality in public sector organizations; a reality that makes the activity of building community in the public sector very different from that of one in the private sector.

Participating College Presidents' Contexts

The contexts of the participating college presidents had both similar and differing attributes. Similar aspects were found in the governance models, programming, and accountability measurements. The differing aspects were primarily demographic, operational, and resource issues.

The following description of the key internal and external attributes of the five organizations is based on information found in public, institutional, and government documents including annual reports, calendars, brochures, pamphlets, media reports, and internet web pages.

Demographics

The locations of the institutions examined ranged from inner-city to small rural centres, and from a catchment of over one million people to one of less-than fifty thousand. These numbers do not include the foreign students enrolled in larger centres attracted as part of the colleges' cultural and program diversity initiatives. One institution had satellite locations in over twenty communities while others had a couple of satellite locations. Initially, colleges were set up to provide services to particular geographic areas; more recently, the ministry has encouraged locating satellite campuses wherever educational business can be sustained. Hence, satellite locations for some of these colleges overlapped.

Economic activity within the regions ranged from unprecedented growth to consistent average growth, depending on location in the province. The primary reason for the growth and strong economic performance was, according to Human Resources Development Canada,

> driven primarily by strong energy markets, growth in business investment and expansion in the service and manufacturing sectors. Federal and provincial tax reduction together with lower interest rates served to increase consumer demand and further stimulate the economy. The province's reinvestment in the health care sector also helped to boost the economy by creating additional jobs in this sector. These are some factors that were key in Alberta's economic growth in the past and will continue to have an effect on the province's economy in the future. (HRDC, June 7, 2001)

Furthermore, economic activity has had an impact on both enrollment growth and decline. The institutions' enrollments ranged from approximately 1500 to almost 8000 full-time equivalent students (FLEs). In general terms, this translates into approximately

3,000 to 40,000 registrants depending on the combination of full-time and part-time enrollments. Growth in FLEs was generally positive, ranging from a high of 9% to 2%. Enrollment pressures were highest in larger centres while modest enrollment growth was shown in the rural areas. The summary data presented here are from the 1999-00 *Institutional Enrollment Growth* report by Alberta Learning.

Governance

All of the institutions examined were public board-governed organizations operating in accordance with the Colleges Act. Generally, their administrative structures were similar and included a hierarchy of an executive team comprising the President or CEO and vice presidents or deans for academic and service areas. The second level included deans and chairs while the third level included coordinators, managers, and/or development officers. Each institution had a marketing or development office to deal with recruitment strategies. In addition to the model of governance described, each organization was subject to the collective bargaining agreements of the staff and faculty, although some out-sourcing or fee-for-service contracting was being done in some of the institutions. Again, this was dependent on location and the ability to recruit qualified faculty and/or the philosophy of the administration in terms of dealing with access issues. The faculty and staff complement of the colleges studied ranged from about 140 to over 450 individuals.

All of the institutions had external advisory boards to assist with program development and organizational direction.

Funding

Sources of operating and capital funding for the institutions included government base funding, government progress awards (based on performance indicators of enrollment increases and private revenues), tuition revenue, corporate and private donations, partnerships, fundraising events, and enterprise revenues.

Based on these sources, operating budgets ranged from 19 to 75 million dollars. Government base fund contributions varied from 43% to 73% of the total operational budgets. An important consideration for all institutions was noted in one college's news bulletin: "the provincial per-capita expenditures on education have fallen in the past decade, and are not likely to increase significantly in coming years."

Programming

The breadth of program offerings ranged from Academic Development and Career Studies to University Transfer programs. Duplication of specific subject areas was found consistently throughout the institutions. There were also many unique programs such as English as a Second Language, Apprenticeships, Trades Training, and Brokered programs. Fields related to these were driven by location and the type of economic activity within their regions. A number of the institutions offered home study or distance delivery of their programs. All of the institutions offered either a two-year diploma or a one-year certificate, depending on whether they were career/trade programs or professional/university transfer programs. Also, each institution was a member of the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfers, the purpose of which is to provide a "seamless" transfer system within the province of Alberta.

Summary

The Alberta college sector has had a rich and diversified history over the last century as governments tried to align them with the ideology of the day. Colleges are now viewed as economic conduits for providing education based on community and business needs. Local needs programming have been added, increasing the range of programs and services provided. This is coupled with continued pressures from government for increased accountability and reporting. Colleges can now pursue economically viable solutions to meeting challenges and build on their community missions.

Furthermore, the complexity of college governance, the range of contexts, and the demands on college leaders were highlighted.

CHAPTER 5

Findings: Leadership Portraits

In this chapter, I report the five participants' stories; their perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs coupled with their anecdotes which offer us an "idea structure, a mental armature, a set of theoretical frames to help. . .[us] discover community, . . . and create community" (Sergiovanni, 1994a, p. xv).

The data is reported using the parallel format of leadership orientation, creating a shared vision, building community, and leadership challenges. I begin with the organizational and leadership portrait of Anderson.

Anderson

College A is one of the larger colleges in the Alberta system. The College's catchment area is substantial, drawing students from the inner-city as well as the immediate surrounding region. The college also has a small contingent of foreign students.

College A provides educational services ranging from university transfer to vocational training and has had consistent full-load equivalent (FLE) enrollments in the order of eight thousand students over the past three years.

College A's senior level administrative structure includes two Vice Presidents and four Directors. They supervise over 500 faculty and support staff. The organization has an operating budget exceeding 80 million dollars. The President of College A is Anderson whose educational background includes a doctorate in educational leadership.

Leadership Orientation

Anderson's described his leadership role as "trying to predict what may happen in the future and include people in leadership roles to develop direction." He elaborated,

> leadership today is a measure of how one can look at the future, predict as best you can as to what is going to happen, and try to find different scenarios that you can work with people on. There's very limited opportunity to just go in one direction anymore. For me, it requires a very careful combing through the environment; looking at what you feel will work best for the organization as a leader and then trying to find a way to bring that into the internal part of the organization in a meaningful way.

He recognized the need to have individuals involved in leadership roles and to motivate individuals to "get excited and working with you on issues to the point where they become the real leaders of the direction, the goals, and missions that you are trying to formulate under a strategic direction."

Anderson underscored the need to conduct a "careful scanning" of the environment to determine what is happening in the marketplace, particularly in the case of colleges. He identified several questions that needed to be addressed in this process: "What is happening in the job market? What is happening in the career fields that people are into now? What are you seeing in the economy? And in particular, what are you seeing politically is also very important?"

In the case of the latter he noted that

> if the provincial government is putting more focus on a particular area, health, for example, or information technology, then you have to decided whether your institution is lined up with that particular area or not. It's important not to chase it just because somebody else is putting the emphasis on it, and yet it doesn't meet the capability, the uniqueness, and the specialties of the organization.

Anderson also provided a caveat to embracing all the elements that are changing in various environments or the changing expectations of various stakeholders in noting that an organization should "not be changing all the time to try and address some new and emerging needs because sometimes you get people chasing a fad or a topic rather than trying to focus on what they are good at doing." How does he decide?

According to Anderson, the process for implementing this "combing or scanning" of the environment begins with having a workable and effective administrative structure.

> In my case, I have those that report directly to me in the form of what is called an Executive Committee, and beyond that there are direct reports from a larger group which we call President's Council. So, in a structural way we bring together the senior and mid-management level of individuals who, by title, are in that role.

Structure, according to Anderson, is only "part of the picture." Structure only facilitates the process; the more important aspect of determining the future direction of an organization is succession planning and the engagement of individuals in that planning. Anderson stated, "we look very carefully at trying to provide individuals opportunities to participate in leadership activities, leadership building activities, involving them in some decision-making, and perhaps blending some of that decision-making with accountability."

Underscoring accountability, Anderson noted that

> lots of people want to help in making a decision; they give you input, but not too many of them want to stick around to be accountable, unless it goes really well. So the challenge here is to find a way for them to understand that when you are going to make a decision and as a leader, you need to be accountable for that decision. It doesn't mean that you're the person to blame if something goes wrong, but it means that you have to take on that ownership. That's one of the leadership challenges in today's world; where, particularly in academic study, you have a lot of

> collegial activity. Somebody has to be accountable for that decision, and move the issue forward.

The influences on his leadership included both academic and non-academic organizational literature. He argued that the academic literature "lacking when transferring it to the college level." He specifically prefers the work that is oriented to college leadership done at the University of Texas and the University of North Carolina. Anderson argued that "large college leadership hasn't been well described in the literature" and that many of the writers on college leadership (e.g., John Rush and George Baker) "lack credibility in my mind because they've never led an organization. That's a challenge for many of the authors." Anderson prefers to couple readings and discussions with individuals who "have been there and done it. When you do that, you get, from my perspective, a far better understanding of what is needed, what is required, and what's happened." His preference, however, is for

> visiting institutions, seeing what's making them happen, what's happening inside them, seeing why it's happening, and talking to other people—not necessarily the President or a senior leader—because then you can get a flavor and a feel for the place. That, I find, is in today's world, extremely educational and helpful.

Anderson distinguished the difference between university and college leadership by noting that "colleges do not have better but rather different tendencies, and those tendencies require different types of leadership than you would find in a university. That's not a judgmental comment; it is just reality." He further articulated his view on the flexibility required of college leadership—one of adaptability and responsiveness to a consistently changing environment—using the metaphor of driving a car:

> It's like driving a car: You know what the rules are—to keep it in between the lines—but if a rock falls on the road, you don't want to keep driving between the lines because that's what somebody's model says to do or what somebody's theory is, and so you have to learn to roll with the punches.

Finally, Anderson indicated that the leader's role includes advocating for the faculty. He commented, "justifying faculty and academics to the community is also really important."

Creating a Shared Vision

The key values that drove the development of a shared vision were "participatory decision making" and "caring." Although they were not unique to academic environments, Anderson noted that "we tend to put a little more focus on them by reaffirming those values on a regular basis."

In order to develop a vision, it must begin with careful listening. Anderson noted that "you don't start by coming in and saying, 'this is my vision'; you listen, and so when I came into this institution, I spent a lot of time listening." In addition to listening and environment scanning, Anderson pointed out that the challenge of vision building lies in the ability to "make sure that it is one that links to the culture of the organization." In order to ensure that the vision building was participatory, he argued that the process at College A provided

> ample opportunity for those around you to influence that vision; to help get clarity on that vision, to allow for some input of their views on that vision, and maybe wording. . . . input from all the people around you in order to get this thing off the ground. It is like launching a satellite. You know it needs a lot of fire power to get this thing going, and no one person

> has that fire power, so you've got to really work at building the energy, get it so that it can be launched.

This energy, according to Anderson, begins with the CEO, the Board of Governors, and the Senior Executive Committee. He noted that the Board's role is to "set or clarify the mission of the organization and to help establish a vision statement." Once the Board has "established those broad brushes, we then turn it loose on the populace." The vehicle for dissemination and feedback proceeds through a much larger group: the President's Council which includes Presidents of the Faculty Association, the Students' Association, and the non-academic Staff Association. It then continues on through the organization's membership. Anderson described this component of the process in the following way:

> they go back, take the starting tease and tear it apart and analyze it, and then come back and say, "Well have you thought about this? And, "What is the implication for it?" So it's a process which involves input and modification, and it comes back and gets cleaned up. It's a timely process.

He further noted that "it is inclusive in the sense that it goes beyond just the so called 'administrators of the institution'. . . it's not exclusive." Anderson commented on the practicality of implementation, when he elaborated further on the strategy of inclusion:

> It's inclusive in the sense that there's lot of opportunity for input; in fact, theoretically, everybody has a chance to have input on it. Practically, that doesn't happen. People can comment on it, and many people don't want to comment on it; they'd rather "tell us what it is and we'll do it." So, we have to work at trying to get them to think about it. What does it mean to them?

For Anderson, the vision statement is a work in progress. He commented, "each year we've tweaked it a bit, we've added some clarity, and we've taken something

away." The metamorphosis of the vision requires continuous listening and articulation of the reasons why the focus is on one particular area, or why there has been a shift in thinking. Anderson elaborated,

> As a leader, you have to have that vision; have a passion for it; have an ability to communicate it; but you have to be prepared to listen to others and let others take ownership of it; and move it along. When they do that, they tend to like change, and that's fine because the boat is still going in the right direction.

Once the vision statement had been developed, the process of actualizing the vision, according to Anderson, "is to develop the vision statement into what we call our key strategic direction or directions." He further noted that

> what's really critical is getting people to develop goals and objectives for each of their units that relate to them. So then, we ask them to show how that relates and that's how we also do some resource allocations. At the end of the day I ask, "Show me; tell me why this particular message links to this goal or strategic plan." It's not rocket science, but it works.

The initial energy required to give the vision momentum began with the President. He must have clarity of presentation, a passion and belief for the statements made, and have credibility as a leader. Anderson argued that

> leaders do have to state a vision at sometime. You have to be passionate and clear about a vision. That vision can be very broad, and it can be very futuristic, but it has to be something that you firmly believe in, that you can passionately talk about, and that you have credibility to address. If you are missing any one of these, the stool will fall over. You've got to have all three of the legs pretty solid to make this thing work.

Anderson offered the following anecdote as an example of the importance of communicating, reaffirming, and understanding the shared vision:

> I was invited to be the keynote speaker at a conference in the United States, and I'm actually taking four of our faculty to that conference. We are going to do a skit, a little bit of a play, and we'll see how that goes. We're going to try and communicate our value system through theatrics because we think just standing up and running off a few points just isn't going to do it anymore. We have all heard those speeches, and they sometimes come out a little small, so we hope that by acting this out we can share with the audience the importance of values to our College and how those values are used on a very practical basis. So we have a little skit that we will be doing, and we're looking forward to it.

Historically, Anderson has had a strong foundation on which to build the institution's current vision. This foundation originated with the founder of the College in the form of a creed. This creed, according to Anderson, "is still very much used as a reference point for the college." He offered a paraphrased and shortened version of the creed as "leaving the vineyard better than you found it." He further commented that "in and throughout the creed are things that lead up to that, but the bottom line is—what are you doing to contribute to making this a better place?"

Building Community

In beginning the discussion of building community, Anderson described two distinct communities: "there is an internal community in an organization and there is an external community." He further noted that "many of the trappings of those communities are the same but there are some differences. . . this creates bifurcation, in a way, between where the Presidents are supposed to focus their attention. Is it really to serve the external community or the internal community?" Despite this bifurcation, Anderson argued that

> in my mind, at least, it's both. I think that when you get to the external community what you need is a very good interface with the internal community. It can't just be through leaders formally recognized by

> structure makers, but all players in the organization can and should be leaders interfacing with the community.

Central to building internal community is "trust." Anderson emphatically stated that

> you have to build trust. It doesn't matter what the values are, it doesn't matter what the strategic direction is, unless you can build trust. My own belief is that you build trust through openness of communication and the willingness to listen; a willingness to interface with people.

Anderson's leadership strategy in building trust is centered on openness and honesty in communication. This is coupled with providing opportunities for discussion and debate on the issues that are at the forefront of individuals' thinking, regardless of their role in the organization. He provided the following example:

> I just came from a President's Open Forum. These are brown-bag lunch events. They are held non-scripted, usually no other administrators in attendance, although they are welcome to attend, and it's with staff. They can ask me any question. Generally, these are very good discussions and dialogues, and it helps head off the lack of understanding or misconception about an issue. I do these on each of the campuses on a regular basis. So I think openness and willingness to be available and accessible to people is extremely important: communicate, communicate, communicate!

In keeping with the communication strategy, Anderson further argued that "an important fundamental step in building community is to listen and use the skills and the knowledge of the people around you." Fundamental to building internal community is sorting through the ideas and knowledge of individuals and providing some "focus, themes, and key strategic directions." This focusing of the community lens is accomplished by asking key questions, namely: "Why are we here? Where are we going? How are we going to get there?" Anderson suggested that "these are very simplistic

questions, but they are nonetheless vital and critical. Once the ideas are established, you keep repeating them and working them and you tweak them and fine tune them."

In summarizing his approach to building internal community, Anderson stated, "it is a matter of communication, clearing up the focus, the strategic directions and letting people be part of that process. Then jump on and come along for the ride, and in fact, start to paddle." According to Anderson,

> this leads the leadership issue from one of trying to address the strategic plan to ultimately, how do you cogently develop an understanding of the need for change. And I say that because people don't realize the benefit of making these changes. To everyone, including perhaps themselves, they are more reticent to participate in any kind of change process. So again, I go back to a far earlier comment about communicating clearly; what are these things and why are they important? What are these things we are doing and why are we doing it?

The leadership challenge of community development requires making difficult decisions. Anderson argued that "simply doing everything or saying, 'yes' to everything is not good leadership," if in doing so, "it would break the community apart in the long run." He suggested that leadership "will always have competing ideas and differences of opinion among and between different areas; they'll each have a reason why those should be all done at the same time." Anderson further underscored the leadership challenge of embracing change and maintaining trust in community when he stated that

> you can't do everything that was done in the past necessarily, or everything that people want to do, so you have to make some decisions. Building community, in a way, allows individuals to clearly understand that if there are going to be choices made, those choices are made in an open manner with an opportunity for input. At the end of the day you may not be pulling in eighteen different directions, you may be down to fifteen or twelve, and that is a very delicate thing to do in a collegiate environment.

In contrast to the challenges of the internal community, Anderson found "the external community is more complex in many ways," in particular, "because the external community is the place where graduates go for employment." In addressing the community's need for graduates and maintaining the external ownership of the organization, Anderson suggested that curriculum development is one example. He identified curriculum development as an area where they "rely significantly on input from the external community, and then monitor and make changes."

Furthermore, Anderson addressed the leader's role in building external community as being one of

> trying to ensure that the community feels they are part of you, and that they, in fact, take ownership of the organization or the institution. I think the leaders that have been successful are the types of leaders who pay attention to that and look for and find ways to get ownership – not control—but ownership of the organization on the part of the community at large.

In addition to providing input on curriculum issues, Anderson viewed the external community as an excellent source for "keeping the institution abreast and up-to-date on what is happening today or what might be happening." One strategy that he employed to bring the community into the college was the formation of "Colleagues of the College." He described them as "a group of business people, but not all pure business—health care and education—who come into the institution, are brought in for two dinners a year. It's a show and tell for us, and a chance to get reactions from them."

Additional strategies that Anderson used in regard to interfacing with the community were providing opportunities "that go beyond the traditional listing of

programs and courses" such as "volunteer work, interfacing to help other institutions that are in the community, and providing training and education for the private sector."

Specifically, with regard to volunteering, Anderson described his participation and visibility in the external community when he noted,

> I'm a member of a service club and I participate on four boards in the community so, I'm active and I'm there. I'm out five nights of the week in the community doing something with somebody. It ranges from attending a dinner to attending a special event on behalf of somebody, or going to a sporting event, or a fundraiser. So my time is very much spent in the community, certainly in the evening and to some degree on the weekends.

These activities occupied about "fifty percent" of Anderson's time, and he argued, "pathways into the community are very important." He further noted the selective aspect to his participation when he stated that "networking into the community through boards, particularly boards that relate to the substance of what the institution is doing, is really important." This, according to Anderson, also requires "getting to know a network of people" and to be visible and active in both "political and non-political events." Additionally, Anderson explained the strategic importance of networking:

> A city the size of ours may have twenty-five hundred influential or people of affluence which you may need or want to connect with. You have to go to where they are and find them, and let them get to know you.

In reference to working with other institutions, Anderson reaffirmed the importance of communicating the vision and direction of the organization by "being prepared to say, 'We're not doing that anymore,' or 'We're not doing that in the future because. . .'" He provided a specific example of working with another institution to promote and facilitate a directional change:

> Recently, we transferred four programs to a sister institution in our community. Now that took a year's worth of work and energy to do, but it sent a very strong signal, and the correct signal internally that we are not doing that, and externally to the outer community, that we're not doing it, that this other institution is doing it and they'll build their future on it, and we'll build our future on something else. You can't do that unless you have a very clear understanding of where you are going, and so it is much easier to be able to say, "This is not in our mandate, this is not something we want to do, this is not where our future is because this is our strategic direction, these are our goals, and here is another institution that can do it."

In continuing his discussion on partnering with other institutions Anderson noted that "there was a feeling of competition with other public and post-secondary institutions in the community." He argued that "it's like envy, it's not really going to help you at the end of the day. You are far better off trying to be a positive force and look for collaborations." He provided the following example: With one of our post-secondary partners we actually had their Board get together with our Board and they signed an agreement encouraging the two CEOs to work collaboratively on things.

Related directly to this is Anderson's third aspect of interfacing: "looking at the community for partnerships, partnerships in all kinds of things. Partnerships from the point of view of fundraising or friend-raising." He further noted that the area of partnering is "emerging and becoming more and more important."

In specific terms, Anderson summarized building community as

> getting out there and being part of it; to live and work and be part of the community in every way you can as an academic leader. I think you need to be seen and respected as part of the community. The days of the old ivory tower stuff have ended in many places, although they are still around.
>
> I also think you need to bring the community into the institution at every opportunity. That's where we've named things like Colleagues of College

> A. We have open houses, we have numerous events, and we encourage people to be a part of who we are and where ever we are, and the greater communities we serve. Also, to remain linked, remain active with the political powers at all three levels of government—municipal, provincial, and federal—is critical.

Success in building community, according to Anderson, is measured in "the kind of support and reaction that we received for things. We get unprecedented support when we host something or do something." Support can also be indicated by the respect directed at the organization. Anderson indicated that

> We have people wanting to become members of our Boards and Advisory Committees, and I think those are the kinds of things that are indicators that things are respected and are working reasonably well, not perfect, but they are working well.

Lastly, Anderson offered a caveat with regard to the amount of personal engagement in building the external community when he noted that "it does take away from being internal." However, he argued that "having a good leadership group within the organization is extremely vital for any President or CEO of an organization."

Leadership Challenges

At the forefront of Anderson's leadership challenge is access to the demand for post-secondary education and the need for additional resources from a number of stakeholders to assist with that demand.

> Providing access to the demand for post-secondary education. I think without question that's our single biggest challenge. It is our key strategic direction, that is what we want to do. How can we do that, and how can we combine integrity and quality and provide that opportunity for people?

He acknowledged that the organization cannot succeed without assistance from its primary stakeholders. He asserted the following position:

> To enhance access we do need some help. It's beyond our ability to do it entirely on our own. We need help from the government for some funding, both capital and operating. We need some understanding from our community that they may be able to play a role in helping, and we need some understanding from students and learners. They've got to start looking at approaching this a little differently than they have.

Anderson provided an example of enhancing access using what he called "fast-track opportunities" that occur during the down time and reduced capacity in the summer months. This requires "cooperation" from members of the organization and community. He took the view that

> we need a combination of all those players coming together, trying to address this, and I think we can get that cooperation. We are moving in that direction right now. We have demand that exceeds supply and how do we get supply up to a level that equals, or at least begins to address significantly that demand. That is the biggest challenge in our institution right now, and it requires getting everybody on board.

In keeping with the discussion of the challenge around access, Anderson provided the following observation on embracing change:

> It means optimizing the space you already have. It means you have to change the rules on how space is scheduled and that means changing places with people where they've been for twenty-eight years. They've taught from this time to this time in the same room, and they don't like the aura of the new room, and they don't like the time, and now you don't get the Friday afternoon or the Monday morning slots. Change is a way of life, and you need to know that will happen, but you go with those that are ready to move because generally, you can't bring everybody along.

Anderson argued a similar point with regard to the challenges that come with change when he brought up the issue of technology.

> An example would be technology or alternative approaches to teaching learning. Some do not want to change, can't change, won't change, whatever it is. Well you couldn't change it for everybody if you wanted to, anyway, so go with those who are ready to change and eventually the others will come along.

In addressing the financial implications of change Anderson noted that "leaders have to be and will always be challenged with demands for requests that exceed their resources." The pressures of limited resources coupled with the broad scope of demands from the internal and external communities requires the ability to "put a focus on what it is you're doing." He further commented that the challenge of "being a leader, being a prudent leader, being a leader of vision, requires you to have an understanding of where the institution should go, hopefully, based on the input from the internal and the external community." However, decisions do need to be made and Anderson preferred to frame the issue of exclusion in a positive light:

> It isn't saying, "no" to something, it's saying, "yes" to something else, and there is a difference. What you have to explain to people is that this is not a finite resource, there is a limited resource here, and that resource can only do so many things.

Anderson elaborated on this: "realize very quickly you can't please everyone. It's not that you're in a popularity contest." When dealing with situations or issues that are in conflict, Anderson indicated that he, "like most people, try to resolve the circumstances" and "go right to the individual and say, 'this is what I received, what do you think?'" He further acknowledged that

> it's sometimes difficult to get a solution that really addresses all of the issues that are drawn to your attention. And those are the difficult ones, and sometimes you just have to walk away from them and say this is the best we can do. It's not ideal. You just have to move on with life.

In closing, the primary leadership challenge at College A, according to Anderson, is about doing more:

> We've been able to, without dramatic increase in resources, positively influence the future of many people who needed some way into post-secondary education. I think at the end of the day, that's the key to what we're trying to do here. We'd like to do more, but that's the challenge.

Brown

College B is a mid-size college located in a growing community with a service area that overlaps that of five other colleges. College B provides educational services ranging from university transfer, to trades and technical, to adult development. The FLEs fluctuated in the area of 3,500 students over the past three years.

College B's senior level administrative structure includes two Vice Presidents and two Executive Directors. They supervise over 700 faculty and support staff. The organization has an operating budget close to 45 million dollars. The President of College B is Brown who holds a masters degree in education.

Leadership Orientation

In describing his leadership at College B, Brown used the language of "shared and transparent leadership." He articulated his leadership role in terms of "creating an environment that allows people to achieve personal success and greatness while contributing to the success and greatness of our organization, of our college." He metaphorically described his role as being a "coach" whose job it is to encourage and motivate individuals,

> as opposed to a rope puller and dragging people along, although there are sometimes when that's a part of job. I spend a lot of time coaching and working with other leaders in the organization. I believe in this organization, that we all achieve success when people at almost any place, at any level in the organization can take on leadership roles for specific tasks and goals.

Conversely, he noted "that sometimes, thankfully, not too many. . . . leaders stand out all by themselves, either trying to drag the organization along or coaxing them to come along." Brown elaborated on coaching, fostering internal leadership, promoting individual success, developing greatness, and the transparency of leadership when he further indicated that his role was to "sometimes be in front of the parade, sometimes in the parade, and sometimes behind the parade."

Brown's organization is not without structural challenges that make fostering internal leadership and accountability difficult. He described a situation where a Vice President had created a "flat" structure with a "whole lot of people reporting to the position." It was something he inherited when he first became President and noted that

> it's not something that I would do if I were creating the organization because I think it gets to be too stressful and confusing. However, that's a choice he made and I fully respect his decision to make that choice. So I see my role in continuing to work with and help him deal with the various situations that come along by devolving responsibility away from his office. While he's been really good at devolving that responsibility, part of his response to that fear has been to take back some of the responsibilities. My challenge is to keep working with him to say, "No, no, you can't accept responsibility for the science budget, that's their responsibility, that's the contract we have with them."

Specifically, Brown developed a "bottom-up" process for financial and operational planning. He stated, "each chair is responsible for building their piece of the operational financial plan" and noted the two components of the strategy: "What are you going to

achieve this year in fairly measurable terms and what are the resources that you require to do that?" Regarding the first component, Brown pointed out that fair measurement will be conducted by

> adopting the concept of key result areas. . . everybody has to provide some measurable key results that they are going to achieve. I say to people, "I want you to tell me five measurable goals you're going to achieve, and five soft things you're going to achieve." People, of course, struggled with that because one of the measurable things was that we're going to provide education to Albertans.

Brown defended this bottom-up strategy by indicating that it was relatively new to his organization and was not without some growth challenges. Brown acknowledged the human element in changing the way business is done:

> Historically, budgets, in a place like this, get built by the five leaders sitting in a room 'without the lights on' deciding what's going to happen. So it's taken a lot of encouragement because many times people are afraid that they're going to make a mistake, and that they won't ask for enough money, or they'll think that they are going to do too much. For people who've worked for a long time in an academic institution that's a really tough thing to do, and it's not because they're incompetent or bad, in fact, it's because they're so conscientious and focused.

Brown supported his concept of encouraging members to participate in leadership at all levels of the organization when he described leadership in terms of the following:

> You've got to be doing it. It's about me being out there saying, "It's your responsibility to do this, and I trust you implicitly to do it; if you make a mistake, that's alright because that's part of the learning experience."

Sharing his leadership experience plays an important role in Brown's leadership practice. Not only does he expect his employees to undergo experiential learning but he also provides leadership lectures for various classes in the college. One of the themes of

current organizational behaviour that he often relates to his students is the notion of a paradigm shift in how organizations operate. He noted that organizations have "created an environment that value risk adversiveness." His experience in government provides an example of how organizations, particularly public ones, are afraid to take risks:

> I've spent several years working in government, and one of things that I have both learned and observed is that the best thing you can do in government is nothing. I don't mean by that sitting around and doing nothing; I mean being really busy but actually not taking risks or moving anything along because politicians are the most risk-adverse people on the face of the earth, in spite of what they say.

In keeping with the notion of risk adversiveness, Brown indicated that individuals will often use a historical context to argue against any change in organizational behavior: "Well, that's the way it was twenty years ago when I came here." Conversely Brown argued,

> that may be true, but there were so few people around that everybody knew what was going on. It's now impossible with seven hundred people for everybody to know what's going on, and so it's a matter of not pushing or driving that responsibility but getting people to take the challenge. So we are really going through the infamous paradigm shift of shifting responsibility to people.

He further supported his position when he indicated that "individuals can no longer hide behind ignorance of process or information about strategic directions." College B has enhanced access to information and knowledge about the organization through technology so that "individuals have better data to make those decisions for which they have the responsibility." Brown elaborated,

> I think in any organization today, the fact people have access to so much information allows them to make better decisions, whether it's about what I'm going to do in the classroom or what we're going to do as a

> department or what we're going to do as a College; it allows them to watch what everyone else is doing. And so, I think people in leadership roles, whether it's people who are President or Vice President, a Dean, or a Chair, everybody can watch and see what you're doing, and watch more than in the hallways or through the windows.

Brown further noted that "we can see at any moment how a particular department is doing," or that "everybody can watch and see what I'm doing, so there is that increased empowerment of people knowing what's going on." As a consequence of shared information, individuals also have shared responsibility in organizational outcomes. "I think by having that kind of information that all of us have to 'walk the talk.'" According to Brown, shared information that is coupled with shared responsibility is an example of how "leadership is becoming much more transparent."

Brown elaborated on his "walking the talk" metaphor; one that is central to his leadership philosophy and practice:

> I think this whole business of "walking the talk" is fundamental to leadership because people have access to so much information. But I espouse a lot around here. For example, we've established for ourselves a goal of becoming the best comprehensive college in Canada. We're about half the way there in defining what we mean by that. I guess related to all of that, I say to people, I don't know anybody who aspires to mediocrity. We all aspire to personal greatness. We all don't know too many people who say, "my goal in life is to be mediocre." I think that working at a place like this you have to feel that you have the opportunity to reach that aspiration. People will be inspired to aspire, if I can say it that way, if they see people in leadership roles who are walking that talk and who sincerely believe and demonstrate that. It's far easier for people to buy into the dream than if it's just something that's on a piece of paper and then all they see me doing is playing golf, traveling around the world, or doing whatever people do as they aspire to mediocrity.

Brown's leadership example is set through engagement with both the internal and external communities. He noted, "one of the things that I spend a lot of time doing is

networking in the community." The message that he consistently presents is that "the College is the community and the community is the College." Brown further underscored the non-delineation of communities when he stated, "as a leader there is no external and internal, there's only the community—I work at the College, I live in the community, and I serve the community." This framework is an essential characteristic of his leadership philosophy and, in keeping with this, he observed that "leaders of today view the world from an integrated perspective as opposed to a segregated perspective."

Notably, Brown did not include government as part of the larger community described above. His own experience, having worked in government, led him to make the following observation: "In spite of government's philosophical role, it really does view itself as a separate and distinct solitude from the real world."

Brown's leadership experience also included both private and public sector organizations. This broad range of experiences was coupled with interests and influences from the literature that contributed to his focus on an entrepreneurial view of organizational management. He offered two books he regarded highly as influential. First, and the "most influential" in his mind, was *Built to Last*. This book is a study of successful and extraordinary companies over a fifty-year period. From his perspective, Brown commented that *Built to Last* was a " fascinating book about what leadership really is." The second, *Mavericks* "is around values-based leadership." He recalled that "it's actually the story of about a dozen or so western Canadian entrepreneurs. So it's real-life experience, if you will."

Additionally, Brown offered the following critique on Covey:

> I'm not a big Covey fan. It doesn't mean that I don't agree with him; I just find him a little too mechanistic and recipe oriented. I don't have any arguments with his seven principles; however, a little book that I do use a fair bit is a Covey book. It contains short stories you can read every day.

Furthermore, Brown admitted that he was "not a vociferous reader. I would like to be a much more vociferous reader, but certainly for the past several years the *Built to Last* book has been a bible for me."

In providing a snapshot of his leadership orientation, Brown indicated that his energies were focused on the activity of transparent leadership, the delegation of responsibilities, and changing the negative perceptions that lay in both the College and the community.

Creating a Shared Vision

Brown began his discussion of vision-building with the declaration that "the core values exist within the organization today. . . They are not something that you say, 'Let's write a set of values, and now these are our values.'" He further indicated that "values can and do change, but the operative words are over time." Brown noted that his organization had not affirmed what their values were in a long time and that they were currently in the process of revisiting and rearticulating them.

> That's a process we are establishing, what we call a framework to guide us in our planning over the next ten to fifteen years. We're not building a strategic plan, but rather, we want to have a set of values and principles: our mission. . . . So that when we come to say, "Should we be going down this road?" We've got a template that can help us answer questions and guide us along that way.

The process at College B can be described as a multi-ring approach. This approach began with the assistance of an external facilitator whose planning principle was that "it is really important for everybody to do the same thing." He started his work with the Executive Committee. Brown noted that

> The external facilitator didn't show up with a package; he actually came and spent several days here and talked to people throughout the organization to get a sense of where we are at and where the points of disconnect were. Then he put together a package for us.

After the Executive Committee meetings, Brown continued, "we then moved out to our Directors and Deans level. . . then out to our Chairs and front line Supervisors. So every body went through exactly the same package." According to Brown, this meant that "people began to know that's how we do it," which reaffirmed one of his strongest beliefs about organizational leadership:

> I'm a real strong believer that people have got to be on the same page. It doesn't mean everybody has to be the same, but they've got to be on the same page in terms of the values we hold, the processes that we use for making decisions, and the different styles of leadership.

Furthermore, Brown made the observation that "power is perceived to be lodged in management. People fight against that, but that changes as we create a more inclusive climate." This inclusive climate also required "decision making to be at the most appropriate level." This, according to Brown, demanded considerable levels of engagement:

> We talk a lot about engagement at the College. It's a word we've adopted and we ask each other: "Have you engaged the people who are affected by this? Have they got the information and knowledge to give you?"

Brown also indicated that embracing engagement begins by "using the word" and "practicing engagement." For example, in the decision-making process, Brown noted that "the first question would be, 'So, who have you engaged or why haven't you engaged the people in my area around this?'" This, according to Brown, was central to building a shared vision. Once the vision was built and accountability measures were put in place, decisions needed to be made. Brown indicated that the engagement continues even after tough decisions have been made. He noted that

> when you make a decision, as a person making a decision you have a responsibility to engage people, you have a responsibility to explain to them what you did in making the decision, and you have a responsibility to be very clear about the expectations that you have because of that decision-making. So we call it the three Es approach to making decisions: engage, exchange, and empower.

Furthermore, Brown indicated that "it's a fairly simple, yet profound process" and that from his perspective "it has been fascinating to watch how this has really taken hold" and that he sees and hears the three Es in action when individuals say, "I'm off to engage people in this discussion." He concluded that sharing of information and engagement is about "shifting the power" and "empowering the organization" to move forward.

Brown described his leadership role as: "Being out there so people can see you. I think it's walking the talk. It's leading by example. I think it's those kinds of things. That's how you develop a shared sense."

In keeping with this Brown added:

> It's about getting people to believe in themselves, because if I believe in myself then as a leader I have the confidence to believe in others. How can I believe in your ability to do something if I'm not confident in my own abilities? And so, I think that's a large part of what I do; it's just being human.

Additionally, Brown indicated that there are some historical challenges in changing the perceptions that faculty have of him:

> It's fascinating to me to learn of people's perceptions of me. There are faculty around here who would only call me the President. They wouldn't think of calling me by my name because that's the world they've grown up in and the President is an office, not a person. There may be a person there, but it's really an office.

In attempting to address these perceptions and diminish the authoritarian stereotype, Brown offered the following strategy:

> One of things I work really hard at doing is not wearing a tie, and I have to work at that because I'm a pretty traditional, conservative person; but I find in terms of interacting with students, and the vast majority of our faculty who don't wear ties, that my ability to stop in the hallway and have a conversation with them is enhanced when I don't have my tie on. I said to somebody the other day, a school superintendent actually, "If I wear my tie and walk down the hallways, the students look at me differently when I don't wear my tie. There's much more eye contact if I walk down the hallway like this." So, it's being out there and being human.

Furthermore, engagement was not exclusive but rather an inclusive activity. The process also required engagement with the Board, staff, and students. Informal lunches with community stakeholders also provided Brown with forums for discussion, debate, and additional insights.

Unfortunately, the mentor who assisted with the implementation of the empowerment strategy passed away during its development. This, according to Brown, was "tragic," but circumstances that followed indicated just how committed members of the college were to the process. Brown provided the following example:

> After he died, we had a lot of discussion about this process around our Executive Committee table, and at the end of the day our Human Resource guy, and very interestingly, our Vice President of Administration and

> Finance volunteered to be the trainers. They really bought into the concept of shared leadership, valued-based leadership, and decision-making; they have done an incredible job.

The outcome of building a vision and the values that made up that vision included traditional concepts. Brown stated, “the discussion focused on integrity, trust, respect; you know, the common things that you would expect.” However, he noted that “one of the interesting debates we’re having is whether or not learning is a value or an outcome.” His position was that “in an organization like this, fundamentally every single thing we do revolves around the belief that learning is something to be valued.”

Throughout the development of the organizational values’ exercise, the one value that stood out was “integrity.” Although three different groups were working on a pivotal value, one on which to focus, Brown noted that “in all the groups, integrity came out to be the most important value.”

Brown noted that the role of the leader is “a mix of both discovering a vision and creating one.” He elaborated when he stated,

> I don’t consider myself to be some kind of a great visionary, but I do believe I have the ability to listen to people, to talk to them, and to understand where they are coming from. As someone said to me not that long ago, “It’s not about creating the vision, it’s about realizing that there is one.”

He provided the following anecdote about his experience of realizing a vision at College B:

> They said, “One of the things you have to do when you get to College B is help to figure out what its niche is going to be because it’s all over the map. College B doesn’t know what it wants to be when it grows up and it doesn’t know if it wants to be a university or what it wants to be.” So I came for three or four months. I listened, and I talked to a lot of people

> and tested some ideas and, almost literally, one day it came to me; I know what our niche is, our niche is to be a comprehensive college. Our niche is to be a regionally-focused institution that provides everything from upgrading, to apprenticeship, to diploma, to university programs for people who live in this part of Alberta. So I started to test that a little bit, and it was amazing because people said, "Yeah, that's what we've always been," and yet for fifteen years they beat themselves because they didn't want to be that or they didn't think they should be that. So for me, that business of visioning is really quite important, but then once you've got it, you've got to start selling it obviously. But if the vision has come from the folks, it's not that hard to sell, but then you have got to be relentless, I think, as a leader in pursuing it, and I mean not to the point of either self or organizational destruction, but you do have to be relentless because people say to me, "What do you mean we're going to be the best comprehensive college?" I say, "Well I don't exactly know what that means yet, but that's part of the journey; to discover what we mean by that."

Building Community

Brown's perspective on building community was that "leadership cannot be internally focused." He provided the following view of community:

> As a leader, there is no external and internal, there's only the community. I don't distinguish when I go to a fundraiser that I am there to support the women's shelter in the community; I am there to promote the College, and I am there to achieve personal greatness. The answer is "yes" to all of those things, and for me that's an essential characteristic of someone who's a leader: they view the world from a integrated perspective, as opposed to a segregated perspective.

Brown also described building community as a "journey" that has to have a "focus on the individual as a participant in the community." He elaborated on the notion of community participation when he declared,

> I work at the College, I live in the community, and I serve the community. I hope that more and more people will say I work at the College and through that I live and work in the community and interact back with the community.

In defending his view of community, Brown noted that "sometimes we have a sense of community as being some kind of homogeneous, socialistic environment. . . this is the community and we all fit into it."

Brown's contribution to building community is two-fold. First, it is "me doing my thing, that helps me to achieve personal greatness while contributing to the well being of my fellow citizens whether that is the community of the College or the broader community." Second, community is the "fundamental principle that each person has to live and work in an environment where they can aspire to personal greatness." He further noted, "I think that is what the journey is about, creating an environment that allows people to be leaders, to achieve personal greatness." Creating the environment, according to Brown, is the "biggest challenge." He also offered that "you're always going to have those few cynics; you're always going to have people who will fall off the wagon in terms of practicing the things they bought into."

In further describing the difficulty in creating the environment, Brown drew from his experience in another institution; "it was a challenge to convince people that we can actually live in that kind of environment." In particular, the challenge was entrenched in a historically hierarchical structure. According to Brown, "this structure was driven from the top, driven on an adversarial model, and driven by academics who are often prima donnas. I say that with great respect because many of them are prima donnas, in the most positive sense."

Similarly, Brown's challenge in transforming the environment at College B was demanding from the onset. He described the structural and financial problems that he encountered at the beginning:

> When I arrived, I thought everything was wonderful, and within three months I found out everything was a mess. The place had all kinds of structural problems, and a one-million-dollar financial problem. I ended up standing out there all by myself dumping 20 percent of the staff and about 25 percent of our business units. It was probably the worst experience of my life.

After this difficult beginning, Brown employed strategies to work towards building the environment that he described. The transformation included Brown "being out there, bumping shoulders with people in the hallways and in the community." This provided him with the opportunity to "let people see that you do what you say you are going to do."

Brown's engagement in the external community utilized "forty to sixty percent" of his time, depending on the time of year. He also proposed that the "right balance should be around a third."

Furthermore, in regard to networking in the community, Brown indicated that

> my wife and I go to every fundraiser. We do it partly because we like it and partly because I go around and espouse internally that the College is the community and the community is the College. So it's being out there in the community to show that to the people in the College, but it's also being out there in the community to show it to the community.

Conversely, regarding the internal community, Brown tried to spend "two to three hours a week just walking around talking to individuals and finding out what's going on." This practice, Brown suggested, is about "finding out how everyone is doing. People obviously appreciate that."

In addition to this, Brown was actively involved in supporting athletic and cultural events within the college. He noted that

> my wife and I go to every single event that we can. We're at basketball games, volleyball games, and hockey games every Friday and Saturday night. We also go to every single event we can at the Art Centre when students are performing.

Furthermore, Brown suggested that visibility in the internal and external communities is an important aspect of his leadership. He provided the following example:

> They joke with me at the basketball games that I've been at more basketball games or volleyball games than all the other Presidents in the history of the College put together and that means a lot to me. I have students that stop me in the hallway and say, "Thanks for being at the game," or I'll run into parents who say, "I hear you're at every volleyball game." I don't do it because I'm trying to impress anybody, it just means that I believe that's part of my role here.

Brown also noted a change in perceptions of individuals "when you keep encouraging people, both by your talk and your presence, to be great." He indicated that "I get a much better sense that people are doing different things in terms of the community, and they are doing it with a lot more pride." He also noted a "shift in people coming to the college both literally and figuratively." Additionally, Brown noted that "building community is not very complicated, but it's fascinating because so often people in my role are there to put people down or fight with the faculty, although I have to do that sometimes."

In keeping with leadership issues, Brown admitted that

> the challenge is to have the people in the various wings buy in, really buy in. Everybody buys in on face value, right! They all say, "Right, how could you argue with this?" And then we go along doing it the way we did last week and that fosters the cynicism and it fosters the frustrations people have.

In dealing with cynicism and frustration, Brown offered three strategies that he employed in dealing with "individuals who won't buy into the dream." They are expectation of engagement, marginalizing, and teachable moments.

First, he described a situation that placed ownership on the individual:

> So I go around and practice engagement and then I have someone come to me and say, "But Vice President so and so doesn't do this," and they give me an example. And so you have to say, "Well, you have to go and challenge them on it." They respond, "Well I don't know if I can do that; I'm just a lowly secretary or a faculty person." I say, "I want you to know that I am committed to this, and I expect the people who work with me to be committed to it. If we're screwing up you have to tell us, but I can't do that for you because you're the one who has to have the expectation of being engaged and having clarity of purpose."

Second, in dealing with those individuals who have been long-term employees within the organization; those that "have seen good Presidents and bad Presidents, and who view him as the adversary and whose role is, at best, to keep me in my place, and at worst, to get rid of me so we can bring on the next guy," Brown's choice was to "essentially marginalize them." He elaborated,

> I don't say that with any disrespect. I have one colleague who would stop me in the hallway pretty regularly to give me a lecture about what was wrong with various things at the college. So one day I said, "Why don't you come to my office someday?" He came and immediately began telling me what's bad about our accounting systems and how we keep our records. So I said, "You seem to know a lot about this kind of stuff, well, why don't you tell me what we should do?" He's never been to my office since.
>
> I bump into him every once in awhile. He still wants to tell me what's wrong with things, and we smile and laugh at each other when I say to him, "Hey, when you've got some good ideas that can help me, I would love to hear about them." But there are some people in this world whose role it is to tell us what's wrong with things, right! The unfortunate thing is that they can be saboteurs at some point. I think that's the value in

> marginalizing them. I think that it's not a nice leadership strategy, but I think it's an effective one, at some point.

In regard to those that won't buy into the dream, Brown indicated that he is not "going to be paranoid about them and spend a lot of time worrying about what they do in the institution," but rather he preferred to work with those that want to "create an environment; one that allows them to achieve their personal greatness while this place succeeds." He further argued that the marginalized "have to make some choices, but I also have to make some choices."

Third, Brown's expectation is to be "treated like anybody else in the organization when it comes to accessing service." With this in mind, he related this story:

> I did have a situation one time where I had a problem with my computer, not long after I was here. So, my administrative assistant called and the response was that "we'll get there in three or four days to fix this" and she said, "No, excuse me; he needs to have access to his computer today, and this is the President's office calling." And they said, "We don't care who it is; he gets the same service as everybody else." So it was sort of a teachable moment because then we could start to talk about what they are saying to "Joe faculty member" or "Sally public" at the Access Centre.

This led to some discussion with the Director of Computer Systems in terms of developing a response-time plan. This, according to Brown, was a "significant shift" from, "well that's the way we do it here" to, "we didn't mean to do that, or we didn't mean to do it that way." Brown further described teachable moments as being "far nicer to be helping somebody than to be controlling them, in most instances."

The strategy of teachable moments also finds its way into the external community, when building partnerships and fundraising. Brown provided the following anecdote on college ownership:

> At a presentation to city council last night—I know all those people on a first-name basis because I run into them at functions I go to, and most of them are pleased with what's happening at the College—I have a debate with council about why they should give us a million dollars. Their position was that they shouldn't give us any money because it's the provincial government's responsibility. However, it's pretty easy to show them how the College has impacted their lives. They tell you the fact that their kids went there, or they went there, and so they quickly begin to realize what they knew all along; it floats to the surface that the College is theirs and it's part of their community. I think that's really been a positive factor in building that ownership.

Furthermore, Brown indicated that one has to be "relentless" in the pursuit of meeting challenges, in particular, financial ones. He provided the following narrative regarding one of his experiences in meeting a rather large fundraising expectation:

> The honorary chair of our campaign said to me, "I have worked on the hospital's three-million-dollar campaign; biggest one we've ever done in this community, and it took us over three years to raise the money." She said, "I don't think you can raise six million dollars in this community." I said, "If you work with me, we will do it. I have absolutely no doubt that we will do it, but I need your help and that's going to be critical to our success. We are going to make it and we're actually going to make it in about twelve or fourteen months from when we started."
>
> We started in January or February and we've gotten half a dozen big pieces out there and we're at four million dollars now. A couple of weeks ago she said, "I didn't know whether I could believe you because I really didn't know you, but you were pretty passionate so I thought I should help. You have just been relentless in pursuing this, and that's been important."

Brown's passion and relentlessness has resulted in considerable success in building community. He indicated that, during an official announcement

> he saw people literally standing with their mouths open. People were astounded that the community believed in us because that had never happened here before. I think that's building a sense of community.

In keeping with building the external community, Brown also indicated that entering the community is not without risks:

> There is a chance of failure going into the community. I get people saying to me, "You've got all those lazy louts up there. You've got faculty who work twelve hours a week." So it would be far more comfortable for me to stay here because then I don't have to listen to that. I defend my colleagues by saying, "In order to teach one hour of lecture, it takes them four or five hours to get ready, and no, after you've taught it once you haven't got it in the bag for the next twenty-five years."
>
> I take great pride in, not so much defending my colleagues, but aggrandizing them in the community because they are the heart and soul of what the institution is. Anyone who wants to take me on about our faculty who work twelve hours a week and get five months off, I'll get right at them; and that, for me, is also transparency of leadership.

Leadership Challenges

The singular leadership challenge that Brown identified was that of leadership succession. He offered that

> As Presidents and at the strong urging of the Board Chairs, we are working on the issue of succession planning. If you just look around our Presidents' table, we have quite different kinds of people; we have some career, academic administrators, and we've got people who have come from different places, both geographically and career wise. I think we're going to see more and more of that. We are going to see more guys like me coming into the system from the outside.

This realignment of leadership schema, one needed to meet changing College mandates, is according to Brown, a result of "significant retrenchment by people through the nineties; if I keep my head down, maybe they won't notice me." Brown further framed this issue using his own story of how he was selected President:

> College B had a couple of choices, they could hire a very well qualified, competent, career academic who had worked his or her way through the system or someone with my background because College B is a forty-

> million-dollar business. They needed someone who could run that kind of a business.
>
> It was their idea because I had no desire to get back into the education business. A friend of mine, who is a headhunter in X, called me and asked about College B, if I knew anybody. He told me what they wanted and I said basically, "Good luck." You know any self-respecting business person would go nuts working in that place. There are not too many PhD business people wandering around that would like to work for half the wage in a educational environment.
>
> He phoned me a couple of weeks later and said, "I was driving home from Edmonton last night, after meeting with the Board, and I figured out who can do this job." I said, "Who?" He said, "You." I said, "No bloody way. I'm not interested in doing that." But he convinced me to at least go and talk to them.

In supporting the examination of the leadership issue, Brown indicated that, "the tough days of the 90s made a big difference." He argued that the changes in funding formulas, "although a painful and difficult time for everyone, allowed us to become something quite different than what we were." He also suggested that "boards then and now are also incredibly different." He elaborated,

> Our Board has moved to the concept of policy governance as the way they run. I am not a Carverite by any stretch, but I do believe the Board's role is policy and I also believe it's the Board's role to act as a unit.

With changes in Colleges' funding, mandates, and governance roles, Brown concluded that research into board governance "will add significant value to helping us understand what kind of leadership we need to be building in our system."

Campbell

College C is a multi-campus College with one of the largest service areas in the province. College C provides educational services ranging from university transfer and career training to adult development, utilizing both on-campus and distance delivery. The FLE enrollment has fluctuated around 1,300 in the past three years.

College C's senior level administrative structure includes one Vice President, two Deans and two Directors. They supervise over 230 faculty and support staff. The organization has an operating budget close to 20 million dollars. The President is Campbell who holds a masters degree.

Leadership Orientation

Campbell's leadership orientation focused on what "leaders did and not what they thought they should be doing." In discussing how leaders can effectively lead, he noted, "I think a large part of a leader's job is to continually articulate the values of the organization; articulate them in one-to-one interaction with employees at convocations, community groups, and at every opportunity."

He further underscored the leader's responsibility for articulating values and vision of an organization when he commented,

> I think that leadership by its nature is a centralizing kind of force in that you're pulling people towards a common objective, a common vision, and a common mission. I don't apologize in any way for having a centralizing kind of leadership because I think that's the only way you pull things together. It's what you get people to adhere to. If people are saying this is an overly centralized institution, how did that come about? So you question things like value statements and mission statements. All of that has to come from the grass roots. That's a process very broadly based and

> extensively consultative, but once you arrive at a vision, then the leader has to go out and articulate it; you have to pull people towards it.

The primary theme that was woven throughout Campbell's message, one that he emphasized strongly, was respect: "It is saying what do I value most about the College—I value respect." He elaborated on the theme of respect by addressing different facets:

> A respect for the communities, a respect for cultures, a respect for the learners . . . that fundamentally we're all equal. We just have different roles, we are at different ends of the continuum, depending on where we are in the organization. I think respect is a really important value. It's the value that ties us to the community. Respectful listening and respectful advice. You don't have to agree with everybody; you don't even have to do everything everybody always tells you to do, but you have to respect where it's coming from, and you have to demonstrate that respect.

Respect, according to Campbell, is demonstrated by "having the Elders come in for a ribbon cutting. . . we hold Elder's luncheons, we have Elders sitting on our advisory committees, we have Elders sitting on our Board of Governors; that's just respect for Elders." Campbell also spoke of the College logo as having inherent cultural, language, and partnership meanings. He suggested that this symbol is a powerful example of how College C demonstrates respect for the diversity of needs and purposes of the communities it serves.

> The logo contains multiple meanings. It's very deliberately thought out, and many people know what it means. Its shape represents the partnership between the students, the communities, and the staff; that's what the College is.

Demographically, Campbell's organization differs substantially from the larger institutions in the system, especially those located in city centres. He described a distinction of providing leadership in rural Alberta:

> I go back to small-town, rural Alberta where people tend to know you. You don't have the anonymity of the big city. I bump into the ordinary taxpayer, my students, and my staff in the line-up at the local grocery store. That's the kind of fishbowl living you do in rural, small-town Alberta that you don't do in larger cities. I think you have to build up ways and values to help you live within that fishbowl. That's where it comes back to respect.

Furthermore, the leadership and management challenge for Campbell was made more complicated by the fact that his organization is located in several different communities. From an administrative perspective "it is the most decentralized of the Colleges in the system."

In addressing community, Campbell noted that "we don't see the communities as being outside of our College, we see the communities as being part of our College and the College as part of the communities." Campbell addressed their strategy in bringing these communities together.

> In every one of the communities we have a Community Education Committee drawn from local people who advise us on the operation. We get everything from the light on the back door doesn't work, to how can we address family violence, to there are jobs opening here, how can we get some training in?

Managing several different communities also required developing a structural system that would facilitate operations in the various communities. Campbell argued that

> you can't have a highly bureaucratic, highly hierarchical system, and do the melding in two dozen different communities because you have to do things slightly different in every community. You have to have a fair

> amount of tolerance along the edges, along the margins for that kind of thing.

Campbell framed the organization's goal in dealing with such a broad demographic when he acknowledged that "getting the College dedicated to the needs of the communities will strengthen this College." Further to this, in direct reference to the main subject of the research, he summarized his position with the following:

> When I think about building community, I think about building the College within the communities. I'm talking about embedding the community of the College into the communities and the communities into the College. Not just building within the College a community.

Campbell also added a caveat to responding to multiple needs of the various communities in stating, "sometimes, you have to say, 'no we don't do things that way here. We do it like this.'"

In discussing his leadership development, he indicated that much of his career was spent in the public school system in capacities as Principal and Assistant Superintendent.

> I was Chairman of a large public school board for five years, so I have a lot of experience on the community side. If you're a public school trustee for that long, and you're a chair of a large school system in rural Alberta, you get a very different view of community education then you do from the literature.

His leadership development was largely based on his own experiences. He described his development by stating,

> I started in the business of educational administration in a small native community, and I came in as an outsider. I did well there and have to tell you that I relied more on my own experiences, taking what I learned in a small, native community and then scaling it up to larger and larger institutions.

With regard to additional influences, Campbell did not identify any one particular source, although he indicated he "does an enormous amount of reading." He observed:

> Despite this, I don't have a particular favorite, although I could go through my bookcase here and probably pick out a couple of books here and there that were strong. Everything from battling chaos, to thriving on chaos; Peters' books, I've read all of them. I gain good advice from them, but I tend to really rely on my own instincts built over twenty-five years of working in small communities.

When he described the leadership match between himself and College C, Campbell admitted,

> I know I couldn't be the President of a large institution focused in one community. I couldn't be the President of a big city college or a downtown college. I wouldn't know how to do it. I tend to rely more on my experience in rural, small-town Alberta than on anything else.

He further explained his preference for working at College C when he proclaimed "I like working in small communities."

Creating a Shared Vision

Campbell indicated that developing specific goals and direction is a "bottom-up" process. He described their current process:

> consultation with employees, student groups, and community representatives to develop mission statements, vision statements, and now we're going through a process of rearticulating our values. Once you've gotten some kind of written form, in as much plain English as you can get, then the articulation of that becomes very top-down.

Campbell reaffirmed that the process described above is in keeping with his leadership philosophy, one which is rooted in his and College C's value of "respect." He

elaborated, "I think that respect is probably the big value that is coming out of this, out of all the discussions around this College." He further underscored this value when he stated, "our College Community Education Committees, which are present and active in every one of our communities, know that we value them and respect them. So with this constant, they act almost as the surrogate client."

Central to building a shared vision is Campbell's belief in "leadership by values as opposed to leadership by management objectives." His values-based leadership is in alignment with his belief that "the central purpose of leadership is to manage change." Campbell elaborated on the notion of embracing change,

> Values-based leadership's central purpose is to manage change because we're always in change. To do it from a values' base, and as you inevitably must, occasionally change those values. Then you do it through a very old consultative process where people are brought into it. It becomes a lot easier if the change is from within and people can see that we're changing things in a positive way.

To support his engagement of others in vision building and managing change, Campbell offered an example directly from College C's history:

> The amalgamation of the two Colleges into one in 1988 was a change from the outside. It would have been really easy to point fingers at somebody outside and affect the change by creating a common enemy. That would have fallen apart and would have been the straw that broke the camel's back. It would have totally discredited the leadership within a matter of years. The thing to do was say, "Yes, we're changing, and what we're going to do is we're going to create a new mission and a new set of values."

Building Community

College C's unique attribute of over twenty-four campuses makes building community "an extraordinarily daunting task." Campbell also acknowledged that

"building community within the various campuses is so daunting that it's not even really worked at that much." Campbell elaborated,

> My staff has no sense of this College as it is not under one roof. You come from College Z which, I dare say, ninety to ninety-five percent of your students and staff are under a single roof. Your President can literally walk a couple of hundred yards in either direction from his office be in immediate contact with everybody. That has enormous advantages. It gives the staff, the students, and everybody a real sense of cohesion and community. That's because it's the experience you go to everyday. You experience this large College. My staff doesn't have that. I have facilities in twenty-six different communities. That means I've got staff in twenty-six different communities. It is an enormous territory. Sometimes I think, "Well, it must be nice to just walk out of the office and just go visit staff," but instead I drive fifty to sixty thousand kilometers a year.

The "College experience" is limited by the communities in which the staff and faculty serve. In keeping with his description of the difficulty his multi-campus organization has in building community, Campbell also offered this illustration:

> A secretary in X knows that the rest of the College is out there, but for her the college is a couple of dozen students, two or three instructors, and the local people of the community who drop by to ask questions. That's all they experience.

Providing administration is also an added complexity. Campbell provided this illustration:

> We are not a traditionally-structured College, being totally broken-up. I don't even have an administrative headquarters, although this building looks one. This is a place where the President hangs his hat. I happen to have a Finance unit down the road, but I've got my Human Resource unit somewhere else. I've got my Property Services people spread all over. I've got Con. Ed. offices in five different communities.

Campbell also noted that "in order to get our management team together they have to travel from four different directions. We can't call a quick meeting." Although they have teleconferencing, this solution, he suggested "is difficult enough."

In addition to management meetings, College C has community, advisory and other stakeholder meetings. Campbell expressed the impact that has on his leadership role:

> I'm going to a Community Education Committee meeting tomorrow night in Z. Z is three hours from my home. I have a normal management meeting during the day and when the management meeting winds up I'll drive over to X, sit and talk to community leaders for probably two to three hours and come back. If I'm lucky, I'll be home by midnight. But that's all part of it.

Key to Campbell's leadership strategy in dealing with such a large number of satellite campuses is the "delegation of authority." "Size," suggested Campbell, "forces delegation. The smaller the College the more the CEO can handle himself or herself, so there is less delegation." He also noted that "in talking to other Presidents, I know that we have more delegation of authority in this College." He offered the following examples:

> We have more people with signing authority. We have more people who have to feel very comfortable in talking to the local media at relatively low levels in the organization. Why? Because we're not all in one community. Say the local paper phones, which local paper? We have nine local papers in our service region. We've only got one media person, so everyone needs to feel very comfortable.

Campbell also underscored the importance of the leadership team in dealing with a large service area. He stated, "it's not just the CEO, there is also a leadership team that has to be out there doing the same things. It is not something I could do by myself." He elaborated on the importance of internal/external leadership:

> the leadership team does just as much traveling around as I do, just as much going out to various communities dealing with issues, going to ceremonial activities like Convocations. It's not something that just two or three people are doing. Our leadership team, all of them, have to do that and they get called on to do that.

Despite the difficulties Campbell expressed in building community, he and his team employ four strategies to assist in working towards this goal. First, he expects his leaders and managers to "articulate the institutional values so that in their normal interactions within the communities the public understands where the place is going."

Second, College C also has an "open-door policy" for their campuses. Campbell noted that "this is another way of building community . . . . by taking a campus and embedding it within the community" so that "the community comes to the College and the College comes into the community."

Third, Campbell engages the community. He makes every effort to "be out there as much as possible, articulating core values, and all the 'showing the flag' kind of things." Campbell reiterated that "it is so different in our College because being out there means being in all of these other communities."

Fourth, Campbell returned to the organization's core value: demonstrating respect. According to Campbell, this motif of respect is coupled with "respectful listening" and "respectful engagement" with members of the communities.

Furthermore, Campbell identified structural challenges of College C and the difficulty he had in building a stronger cohesive college community:

> Probably, the most difficult thing that I have ever done was the amalgamation of what was really two separate Colleges. For some reason, the community campuses and the home campus wound up under two administrative structures. They were two separate Colleges, often in the

> same communities, with an extraordinary rivalry between two groups. It wasn't competition anymore, it was almost open conflict, and included all of the community politics as well. That was probably the toughest eighteen months I've ever had.

Campbell's success in transforming two organizations into one was based on employing those same strategies described above. He commented that

> It was back to articulating values. Saying, "No, this is the way that we do things here; no, we don't do things that way." Building respect and getting people to respect each other, even though they thought they didn't like each other. Once they got around the table and realized that the other side didn't have one eye in the middle of their forehead, things started moving along.

Campbell also acknowledged that continued success in building community within an organization that has unparalleled demographical challenges is in large part due to "having excellent people around me who keep me on the straight and narrow." He further affirmed that "I have managed to survive through some really exciting and challenging times because of excellent people and excellent staff."

Leadership Challenges

Campbell identified technology as being the most important challenge facing his organization. He further argued that "the impact of technology on the learning process is going to be amazing, and I don't think anybody has a solid grasp on it." His perception is rooted in his experience as an educator:

> Even amongst all the other stuff I do, I still find time to teach. I teach first- and second-year education students because teaching is still my first love. I'm teaching them for a traditional world that is rapidly changing. In the same way that blackboards and overhead projectors in the modern school system changed teaching and learning significantly over the last five

> hundred years, I think we're going to go through that same change only it's going to be compressed into about fifty years.

College C is being responsive to technological opportunities and change. Campbell noted,

> we are getting ready for it in our College. We're creating distance learning centres or community learning centres in every one of our communities, so that people can hook up into the Internet and video conferencing. We're putting in the technological infrastructure."

Notwithstanding, Campbell also raised the question, "What's that going to mean for learning itself? I listen to the gurus, and they're not talking about learning itself, they're talking about all the bells and whistles around it." He further argued that "learning itself is going to change." He elaborated,

> just as learning changed when we went from the oral almost Homeric tradition of education into the written, I think now we're going into a visual form of education that's going to be very different. Henry Kissenger said something that I thought was very insightful, he said (paraphrased) that "the difference between the print world that he grew up and operated in, and the visual world that he saw emerging, is that the print world is a very stable world." He said that "in the visual world, what you're picking up isn't from solid information but impressions of things. Sometimes those impressions are very fleeting, but you still gather them."
>
> I think that's going to change learning, and I think the whole psychology of learning is going to change.

Another leadership challenge, one that is specific to College C, "is building a management system and governance structure that enables managers to manage and governors to govern." College C recently introduced its first Board of Governors and this challenge, according to Campbell, "is what I'm am spending a lot of my time on." He elaborated,

> I think one of senior management's major responsibilities is to enable governance. Not to take it over, not to manipulate it, at least no more than needed, but to actually enable it and keep the Board focused on major policy issues.
>
> A large part of this challenge isn't just to dissuade the Governors from micromanaging, it's also to dissuade the management team from governing and saying, "No, that's a Board decision. Now if you want to develop recommendations that's fine, but don't come to them with a false choice. Choice A or B, and by the way, with B you die." You provide the two extremes and then your favorite right in the middle, that kind of strategy is nonsense.
>
> I think that's probably the thing that I'm really focusing on the most now. It's not necessarily the issue that takes all of my time, but it's probably the issue that's in the forefront of my mind most of the time.

Douglas

College D is located in a community with a robust economy and serves one of the larger regions in the province. College D provides educational programming ranging from university transfer to career training to adult development. The enrollments at College D have had substantial fluctuations in the past three years and averaged approximately 1,300 FLEs.

College D's senior administrative structure includes two Vice Presidents and two Deans. They supervise over 200 faculty and support staff. The organization has an operating budget close to 30 million dollars. The President is Douglas who holds a doctoral degree in college leadership.

Leadership Orientation

Douglas's discussion of leadership began with his focus on "facilitating the direction of the organization." He noted that his leadership role

> has evolved into the importance of simply setting general direction, ensuring that you have really good people, and then having them carry forward. . . . Then it's very much the responsibility of those people in the organization who have responsibility for it; delegation is key.

Additionally, Douglas indicated that he has expectations that go beyond individuals identifying challenges. He explained,

> the other thing that I like to do is expect people to come—you know the age old slogan—with solutions as opposed to problems, and my role in that instance is sometimes to simply select from available options and/or confirm what others have recommended or suggested.

Coupled with the expectation of responsibility and delegation is the development of leadership within the organization. He indicated that "the other part of my role is to develop people within the organization so that they can take on additional responsibility, and provide them with opportunities to experience more senior level decision making; to do the mentor thing."

Douglas gave this example of his internal leader development approach: "Third-level administrators, Directors, Deans, and other selected individuals are rotated through the Executive Committee so that every third year they have the opportunity to sit on that committee and everybody sits there with an equal voice." He further described this as a "vocational style" of governance.

In addition to his commitment to professional growth of College D's membership, Douglas indicated that "core to this organization is a commitment to students. Everybody says "their" students, so there is nothing different about that, but I like to think that we translate that into action, and our decisions reflect our commitment to the community."

This commitment to students is supported by how the institution sees its purpose and functionality in a rapidly expanding community:

> We really see ourselves as a preparatory for work as opposed to a transfer institution. We are not interested in degree completion particularly, other than as it applies to people who want to stay here. For example, nursing. We have degree accreditation, but our major focus is on getting people jobs.

He further underscored the importance of vocational training, their commitment to the community, and the central role they play within the community when he stated that

> we are here to serve the community. They dictate our organization as well, we are pretty much the only game in town and we have to be very comprehensive; that's a core value. We have to be responsive; that's a core value. But we really focus on preparing people for employment.
>
> Given the boom nature in our community here, people want jobs, we want to focus in on services we can provide. We want to focus on the Aboriginal people so they can take advantage of the economic development in the region. Service to communities, real service to students, staying in touch with our community, being responsive, being quick, being responsive to industry needs—these are all core values.

One of the catalysts that forced Douglas's organization to re-evaluate its purpose and direction was Advanced Education's province-wide directive of a twenty-one percent roll back in operation funding. This, according to Douglas, forced them to

> really take a look at what we were doing here. As a result of that examination, we said, "Hey, there are some things we are doing here just because we've always done them, and that doesn't make sense anymore." Consequently we really focused in on where the job opportunities were.

In order to actualize the commitment to student and employer needs, Douglas argued that

> we really have to be very responsive, very flexible. We need to mount and shut down programs. We cannot get into this old thing about we are going to mount a program in 1980, and twenty years later we are still running the program. We don't do it that way anymore.

He provided specific examples of responsiveness and listening to the needs of students and employers. First, he told a story of partnering with industry and the positive outcomes of building relationships within the community that resulted:

> Industry came to us and said, "You know, we have got about five or six hundred jobs so we want you to put on a program, and this one's got to be different." We really want to integrate employability skills into this program and we said, "Okay, fine, but you know we don't have the money to develop this." They said, "We will give you 500 thousand dollars to develop and offer this program over a five-year period." So we developed a seven-month program with a major focus on employability skills. In a matter of about three or four months we had an entire new program up and running, and working with industry.
>
> To select, we announced to the community that we were in a position to take 18 students. We had about four-hundred people show up to an information night that were interested in this program. We have, in 18 months, got the third cohort. The 500 thousand dollars has subsequently turned into probably a million dollar deal; because of our quick response, industry was inclined to give us the money.

His second story highlighted the need to respond not only by implementing new programs but also eliminating them when the community indicates the program is no longer needed:

> We have had a certificate and diploma program forever. All of a sudden the local industry people are saying, "You know that is fine but we cannot wait for two years, or we can't even wait for ten months. We need a four-month course." So we mounted a four-month program. Then, all of a sudden, they say, "We don't need those kind of entry-level people anymore, we're interested in the professional level." Okay fine, we will shut that program down.

Part of the strategy in responding to community needs includes the "contracting out of services," if the expertise or interest is not found within the organization. Douglas shared this story of the cyclical nature of program responsiveness:

> The local hospital had a shortage of LPN nurses. They said, "We really need a LPN program." So rather than waste a lot of time and money, we went and brokered one from another institution. We had it up and running within a couple of months. We ran it, met an immediate need, and then suspended it. We did that for a couple of years, and then we mounted it again.

Douglas's passion and commitment to the responsiveness motif was further emphasized when he argued that

> we have to be very nimble, mount and shut down programs very rapidly as a result of changing needs in the industry. If we can't be responsive to industry, they won't come to us; they'll go to the private sector, and we will lose them.

In order to facilitate the development of relationships and partnerships with industry and the community, Douglas had dedicated "workforce development coordinators" whose responsibility it was to "be out there with industry everyday." Specifically, their role was to determine what the requirements of industry were and to communicate the willingness of the College to coordinate or put a program together. Douglas also noted that "it doesn't mean we have to deliver it with our faculty. Sometimes all we do is coordinate."

Partnerships, according to Douglas, are not just simply about "going out with our hat in our hand. Partnerships are reciprocal arrangements." His commitment to the value in partnerships was acknowledged when a private sector organization and the College received national recognition for their successful partnering:

> We did something for them. We went down and presented the initiative to the Conference Board of Canada. They were super-impressed and the company got national recognition for that. We also received national awards because we were able to respond so quickly.

Moving to those influences have helped shape Douglas' leadership style. He indicated that he has been in the community college system for about thirty years and that his leadership has been influenced by "watching and learning from the really strong, good leaders, the not strong leaders, and some reading coupled with my own experiences."

Douglas holds a PhD in college administration from an American university; which, according to Douglas, "is internationally known as a training ground for community college leaders." In particular, he noted that

> what probably struck me and really formed or shaped my own style, if you will, is that we had community college leaders from leading institutions in the United States who would spend a day or two with the class and talk about leadership style and about their experiences.

He also indicated that the literature has influenced him "to some degree" but concluded that "observation" was the primary source of inspiration.

With respect to the changing role of College leadership, Douglas offered this anecdote:

> when I was doing my data collection fifteen years ago, what I was identifying as a role of Community College President were things like academic leader, their role in contract negotiation, and certainly the care and feeding of the Board which will always be there. There was no mention of fundraising; there was not much mention of this community interaction. The role of the President was viewed as not exclusively internal, but that was the focus, maybe it was seventy percent inside and thirty percent external view. That has totally turned around now.

In addition to this observation, Douglas drew a clear distinction between the leadership roles in colleges and universities, "we have to distinguish ourselves from the universities; we have to distinguish ourselves by acting more like the private sector deliverers. If we don't, we will lose it. That's just the way it's going to be."

Creating a Shared Vision

According to Douglas, the process for building their vision is a "simultaneous bottom-up and top-down process done independently with various stakeholders." Every four or five years they conduct a major strategic review that includes consultations from "focus groups," both internal and external. The process also includes three distinct internal groups: the Executive Committee, the Board, and the Leadership Committee. They each independently develop six to eight goals for the organization without influence from the President. Then, they would have a retreat with "the twelve or thirteen of us going around the table identifying what the key issues are and then looking for ideas."

Subsequently, at the Board retreat "I would go armed with the leadership team's identification of goals, executive goals, and then the Board would do their thing. Eventually, it all comes together."

The strength in this approach, according to Douglas, is in "looking for similarities." He indicated that

> if the Board has goals that are really way off as far as the other two groups, then we've got a problem. If the Leadership Team has identified goals that are out of sync with the Executive and the Board, then we've got a problem. Invariably, the three are really consistent, and we've all identified what the key issues are.

He also noted that "everybody's role in this process is a little different." Douglas offered the following example:

> Obviously, if we're talking about construction of facilities, which we are now, we're talking about meeting needs through expansion of our housing and building the technology centre. So at the Executive level, we would talk about it in terms of selecting architects, getting the plans, and getting the construction done. The Board would be talking about high-level stuff like what is the role of technology in this institution? What are some new program initiatives that we might be looking at to get involved with this technology centre, and how are we going to get the community engaged and interested and supportive? Then at the other level, the Leadership Team level, the Physical Plant Manager will have one of his goals, he's going to really micromanage that thing, so all of a sudden it all comes together.

Furthermore, Douglas did not differentiate between strategic planning and vision building. According to Douglas, the "simultaneous approach tends to be our style, the one we use in this institution for strategic planning or vision building."

In regard to changes in mission and vision imposed by the financial constraints of Government six years ago, Douglas noted that "community colleges were at a bit of a fork in the road." In response to external pressures, Douglas offered College D's approach:

> we looked at it this way, we said, "Okay, in the private sector what happens when you've got a real reduction in your revenue? You have two choices: lay tons of people off and shrink your organization, or look for alternate sources of revenue." I guess we chose the way of looking for alternate sources of revenue and so in the end, that made us more connected with the community.

Additionally, Douglas was inspired by what was happening in the United States where colleges were already engaged in finding alternate sources of revenue. While on a sabbatical in Arizona and North Carolina, Douglas witnessed the importance of a

workforce development strategy. He concluded, “if we were to be really effective, we needed to expand.” This aggressive approach, according to Douglas, was in contrast to the events that were taking place in the system. He noted that “most rural community colleges in this province were shrinking; enrollment was shrinking, staffing was shrinking, and lots of people were in trouble financially.”

This vision of a stronger and more efficient organization resulted in growth and expansion; “when everybody else was shutting buildings down we built buildings in the middle of those very difficult times.” This shift in the vision of the organization began with addressing the question of choice; one which led to a more entrepreneurial way of doing things. “We had to become more business-like, we had to find out what our community wanted, and we had to respond to it.” Douglas indicated that this new organizational vision was not without criticism from internal stakeholders. “There were certainly academics in this institution that were not very happy with that, but if our survival depended on that, then I had to do a lot of talking on the inside.”

Initially, Douglas invested resources into workforce development officers so that “they would be out there finding business bringing it to us.” The faculty initially viewed the idea of “selling” educational and organizational services to the community with mixed feelings:

> Some traditional faculty thought that was just silly, until I was able to show them that the exercise brought in a million dollars a year. A portion thereof went to pay their salaries. So if you’re in Visual and Performing Arts, you may not have an opportunity to get very engaged in that kind of work, but you do what you can, continue to do what your doing because of the injection of money from our sale of education.

Douglas provided the following illustration in support of the workforce strategy and how it changed the views of the faculty, particularly in an area "which is probably in some minds, the least responsive to business and industry."

> The Performing Arts people said, "Maybe there is an opportunity for us." Now all of a sudden, we have unbelievable corporate support. Every play has a sponsor. It costs you ten thousand dollars to get your name associated with a play. We have strong support; that's part of my fundraising efforts. I'm always looking for money for the theatre. We have receptions that are paid for by local business, and local business buy student art. The Performing Arts are now a leader in the institution.

He further argued that "in Canada today if you're not entrepreneurial in the arts area your probably not going to survive. Government largess is over with, and so we looked for alternate ways of surviving."

Douglas's vision coupled with the strategy of workforce development has not only changed the way in which College D conducts its business but also the way in which the internal membership views the future. Demonstrated success, he believed, has had a positive impact on morale despite initial reservations:

> I think people do see that there has been a significant change in mentality. If we are to survive and continue to be high paying, as far as our faculty and staff, with lots of opportunities for professional development, it is because we are getting close to industry and responding to industry. As a result of that, we have money flowing in whereas other organizations don't.

Building Community

Douglas described his role in building community as "just being an integral part of the community and doing that everyday." He elaborated on this:

> Building community is personally making sure that happens, ensuring that we are involved in all aspects of our community, and ensuring that the

> leaders in our community and our institution are very much a part of our community. That is a big commitment of mine.

In order to develop a sense of community, Douglas indicated that "first of all, everybody's got to be on the same page and everybody has to be moving towards the same goals and objectives." He also offered that the adage of "we are divorced from the community doesn't work. We are a community college, and in a smaller community like this you have to be part of the community—it's always been a community."

The transition to involvement in the community has not been instantaneous. Douglas indicated that their strategies and successes "evolved over time" and that their commitment to community "has proven to be very effective."

From a leadership perspective, Douglas argued that "you not only have to take a leadership role inside your institution but also outside." According to Douglas, leadership requires that you

> have to be doing it yourself, and that you have to be seen to be engaged in the community; you can't be distant. You demonstrate it by not talking about it, but by actually doing it, and that's obviously more powerful than me sitting here saying, "We've got to be part of the community and the community college really is important" and then do nothing about it myself.

Douglas offered the following illustrations of engagement and leadership by example:

> I ran the United Way. I'm on the Games Planning Committee. I've been on the Public School Board, and the list goes on. I go and talk to whoever, I talk to the Rotary group, and I do a lot of fundraising now. I'm talking to potential donors and really draw, as much as possible, an understanding that we are more like they are than they imagine.

Douglas reaffirmed that being engaged in the community is one of College D's "core values." He also noted that he "expects the administrators in the institution to be involved as well" and that leadership by example should be coupled with

> encouraging your staff and then allowing them the opportunity to be involved. You can't very well say, "I really want you involved in community activities, and then ask, "Why are you leaving here at two o'clock to go to a United Way meeting?" You have to say, "Fine, I'm supportive of that. I'm supportive of people being involved in the community, and you'll have the necessary time to go and do that."

Douglas also observed that the organization is well suited to meet the needs and requirements of various community groups and stakeholders. He indicated that "our facilities are available and our organizational skills are available to serve all aspects of this community."

Additionally, Douglas indicated that much of his time and energy is spent on external relations.

> I would say about 40 to 50 percent of my time is spent fundraising. You throw in maybe an additional 10 or 15 percent that is somewhat related but not directly so. I'm sure that well over half, maybe up to 60 percent or so, of my time is spent in the community in one fashion or another.

With this in mind, Douglas indicated that the internal operations are primarily left to the Vice President. According to Douglas, "the Senior Academic Officer (SAO) is responsible for College D's programming needs," and that "he looks to that person to be sensitive to the programming needs. They lead the whole exercise."

In keeping with the need to "appeal to the broadest range of the community" and being an "integral" part of the community, Douglas also suggested that the SAO, and the

Deans are required to constantly liaise with the community to develop programs. He noted that

> if the Chamber, school districts, and private businesses want to do something, they call us. Small business aren't exactly clear about what they require, so we need to work with them and identify their needs and deliver. We need to work with high school students. What programs do they want to take? How can we convince them to stay in community D as opposed to go to University X or Z?

Furthermore, Douglas elaborated on the process for evaluating, changing, and making difficult decisions on programming:

> We had to develop criteria to allow us to examine programs from the perspective of retaining or eliminating them. So we take a look at all the things that anybody else would look at. What has the enrollment been like? What are the job opportunities? What is the student demand? What is the cost per FLE? Those kinds of factors. So we constantly go through an examination of our programs and question, "Is there a need?"

According to Douglas, this strategy has had a positive effect on the culture of the organization. Douglas suggested that

> we have a culture now that understands that. I don't think it's a threatening culture, but rather a culture that says, "We will be responsive. We will be nimble, and there will be the on-going creation and termination of programs, constantly, even in relatively good times. At least we're not in roll backs anymore."

When questioned about the affect the responsiveness strategy has had on morale, Douglas offered the following:

> I think that there is an understanding because we don't have a morale issue. When we do the Alberta Colleges and Institutes Faculties Association survey we're always in the top third. We went through the changes like everybody else during those difficult times, and probably took more dramatic action than many. We just continued to have balanced budgets. Some people kind of ignored it, put their head in the sand and

> hoped it would go away. But we took dramatic action, we went through rather significant layoffs. Even in those, as we called them, the 'dark days,' I think there was an understanding that "Yes, okay, why would we support a program that had no students or very few students." That didn't make sense. Even in those days, we were expanding programs because we were reallocating the resources, we were saying, "That program makes no sense anymore." Even when we were in a minus twenty one percent, we were hiring people, we were laying people off too, but we were hiring people. So you have to look at the measures; the measure, as unscientific as the ACIFA survey is, indicated morale is okay.

Beyond this measurement, Douglas suggested that "measurements are the true indicators of success and in particular, how is the community support?" He then described some of the ways he measures community support.

First, "well over eighty percent of our students come from this community, that's a pretty good measure." Second, "we raise a million dollars a year; that's a pretty good measure. People put their money into a place that they feel good about. If we were not part of the community, that wouldn't happen." Third,

> we had our students' awards' night the other night, we handed out a little over a 100 thousand dollars worth of scholarships. That's astounding! That's the equivalent of what College X hands out, which is four times as big as we are.

Fourth, "when the Games Bid Committee was put together, I would have been the second or third person called. That's a demonstration of how we're part of the community."

Lastly, Douglas noted that their Board of Governors is a "prestigious board" and that "people clamor to get on our Board. . . that's another measure of how we're connected." He concluded that "those are all, I think, real measures of success of our connection with the community. They are very tangible."

Building community is not without some risks. Douglas described that "tension always exists between an institution like ours and some small business people." He gave the following illustration:

> If we all of a sudden buy Fords and we don't buy GMs, now we've upset the local guy because he's contributing to us. If we're constructing a building and the contractors are from out of town, or we're making purchases, whether it's vehicles or computers, and we do an out-of-town purchase, that really causes tension. It is an on-going disappointment that we have to balance.

In dealing with this friction, Douglas took the position that "if the community had their way, we would do all our purchasing locally. On the other hand, what premium do you pay by doing that?"

The community has additional perceptions that Douglas is cautious about. He indicated that the community's perception of the college is "that we're viewed as government; as an extension of government. Therefore, either not to be trusted or are fat cats who sit down there and do nothing." This, according to Douglas,

> has always been an on-going challenge for me and for the organization as a whole. You know, to be lumped in with government. "Your government; why can't you do this or just give us that?" There is still this lack of understanding.

Douglas also indicated that challenges exist in the planning process. He observed that "external factors influence a changing community." In College D's case, a bust or boom economy affects planning. Douglas observed that

> right now we are in the middle of a boom, but we've also been on the other end. In a one-industry town like this your going to have a boom and bust situation. We have rapid population growth, then stagnation or reduction in population. So the price of oil, in many ways, which we

> obviously have no control over, dictates the ebb and the flow of all of the planning.
>
> Right now we're trying to catch up, keep up. We have rapid expansion with a twenty-five percent increase in our enrollment in the last five years, and twenty-eight percent anticipated in the next four years. The population of the community is growing rapidly. We can't keep faculty, we can't keep staff, and we can't afford to because we're in competition with the private sector. They are stealing people and students. Why would I go to school when I've got a twenty-two dollar an hour job? All those factors really affect our planning.

Douglas further underscored the impact of external factors when he stated, "we don't live in isolation, we cannot say, 'Oh well, we're now at the end of Avenue A and we're not impacted by anything that happens.' We are very much impacted."

In summary, Douglas argued that "being connected with the community, being sensitive, and being part of the community is key." He stated his position more strongly when he noted that

> if your not a part of the community and really understand the changing dynamics of the community, and what's uppermost in peoples minds, then you will fail. You won't be part of the community; you will just be off by yourself and be irrelevant.

Leadership Challenges

Douglas indicated that his institution's challenges are "ongoing, they are standard and have been there for us for years and will continue to be challenges." He identified five key areas. They were meeting Aboriginal needs, space issues, funding, institutional credibility and retention, and maintaining and building relationships with community and government.

Douglas stated that "the major challenge for us is to be able to continue to serve Aboriginal people and enhance our service to them." He elaborated, "Aboriginal people in this region have unbelievable opportunities, but they don't have the educational background or the skills to take advantage, and so we have to ensure that Aboriginal people are ready for those opportunities."

Douglas also indicated that spacing issues are becoming increasingly more important, "as the community grows, and its growing rapidly, we continue to provide new programs, and consequently, we don't have sufficient space." He also noted that "we have satellite campuses and they present their own unique challenges."

Coupled with these is the need for additional resources. Douglas stated, "we have to continue to get new program resources; as you know, funding from government is not where it should be, and so as a result of that we have funding issues." Additionally, he shared his view on the future role of government:

> If we would have sat here waiting for government to show leadership and provide money. . . it's not going to happen now, and it's not going to happen in the future. Healthcare will eat up every available dollar in government revenue, even though we're swimming in money in the province. We've seen 200 million dollars get put into capital, but still we've see no operating. None of us have heard, "You know, we cut you guys back so much we need to give you ten percent a year in your grant for the next five years to do some catch-up." We're not seeing that. So government—I wouldn't say that they're irrelevant—but they are becoming less of a player.

In addressing the institutional credibility and retention, Douglas noted that "we still have young people in the community that would rather go elsewhere, and so we've got to make sure they are attracted." After attracting them, retention becomes the focus.

Douglas indicated that "retention is always an issue, particularly in all of our upgrading programs."

Finally, Douglas indicated that "getting the people on the Board on side, having effective working relationships with faculty and staff, and being responsive in decision making" are ongoing challenges. These he argued, need to be "balanced with their relationship to government" and the need to ensure that "we retain our autonomy and we don't simply become an extension of government," and that financial challenges "don't change, we are never going to have enough resources to meet all the needs."

Edwards

College E is located in one of the larger cities in the province. This multi- campus College has a catchment area that overlaps five other colleges. College E has campuses in other cities as well as abroad and provides educational programming ranging from university transfer to career training to adult development. The FLE count has been consistently near 3,000 in the past three years.

College E's senior level administrative structure includes two Vice Presidents, two Deans and one Director. They supervise over 200 faculty and support staff. The organization operating budget is over 30 million dollars. Edwards is the President. He holds a doctoral degree in educational leadership.

Leadership Orientation

Edwards began his discussion on leadership by sharing his initial perceptions as President of College E:

> I phoned another President because I found myself walking into an environment that didn't feel like a public college and I said, "Can you tell me how these places work because I'm trying to understand. I'm a government employee now, and I'm trying to understand this." And he said, "Well simple, they are benevolent dictatorships." I said, "Well this one will not be because I don't work that way."

Edwards's leadership response was focused on consultation with an emphasis on communication and the nurturing of the individual within the organization. He elaborated on the type of organizational culture that he worked to create the following:

> participatory, team-oriented, with broad consultation and communication. Encouraging the heart. Trying to allow everybody to show the best of their potential. Encouraging passion and commitment to the people; an involving kind of leadership.

He underscored the importance of the commitment to people when he shared his view: "I believe people get meaning out of the work that they do and that their orientation is to do their best." Edwards also observed that "sometimes systems, processes, and structures get in the way of people doing their best" but argued that

> it is peoples' inclination to do their best and that by acknowledging their good work, one ignites the passion they have for the work that they're doing. They are happier at work, they are more fulfilled at what they're doing, and they feel free to be their best.

When asked about the core values of the institution, Edwards passionately articulated that "our institution is learner-centered in a way I've never seen it. This is my fourth institution in Alberta and I've never seen so much absolute caring and commitment to learners, and taking care of the whole person." He elaborated on the holistic approach to the motif of learning centeredness:

> learned centered here means acknowledging the whole person. Acknowledging that they have a very busy adult life that can sometimes impinge on their learning environment. Focusing on what everybody's individual learning style is. Trying to adapt to all the teaching methodologies to do with individual learning styles, and trying to find innovative ways to help adults develop their skills, attitudes, and abilities.

In particular he viewed leadership as "bringing the best out of people but also to push a little bit." How does he do this? "By keeping the vision in the forefront of where are we going together, how are we going to reach learners, what are we going to do to make a contribution to society, and what's our vision for the future."

Edwards suggested that innovation was central to sustaining and accomplishing the vision. He indicated that

> this College in particular is a real hot bed of innovation in learning methodology. We keep very leading-edge staff—put computers into learning processes and found flexible ways to package learning in ways no one else has. It's like bottom-up innovation. It's not coming from the top. A climate has been created in which people are encouraged to be innovative.

Innovation, according to Edwards, requires the organization to be "fast, focused, and flexible." He noted that "it doesn't work like a traditional college, and this is very refreshing."

Edwards elaborated on this through the example of how he began the challenging transformation of the organization's structure; from one that was top-down to bottom-up with the following illustration:

> What I had to do was take an organization where every decision was made by the President, every piece of paper was signed by the President, nothing went outside of this room except what went to Edmonton. Build a flat organization to start with, then start developing the leaders so they could build the internal organization. I took a very broad group of twenty leaders

> and started with retreats, started strategic planning—which had never been part of what they did—and encouraging them to identify their own skill deficiencies. Then bringing in people for workshops to help them shore up what they found and needed to learn. Some of it's about continual attention to learning, peoples' learning.

Furthermore, Edwards framed his attention to peoples' learning with integrity. He offered that "integrity is integrity, whether it be described as trust or always behaving in a respectful manner to all of your partners, all of your learners, your peers, and your colleagues." Respect for diversity, according to Edwards, is also a requirement of leadership integrity. He added that "we have people here from fifty-five countries with just about every different perspective that you can think of; people from total illiteracy to PhDs. It is one of the most diverse learning populations in Alberta."

For Edwards, diversity is a positive attribute one that contributes to the culture of the organization. He related, "there is something about the culture here that is just a given." In keeping with respect for diversity, Edwards shared this story:

> In fact, when I first came in here I observed how clean it was and that there was not a bit of damage or graffiti or anything other than a little wear and tear from bumping around carts. I said, "Do you have a history of violence, of outbreaks, of inter-racial problems, or anything like this?" And they said, "No." They cited one instance where somebody had gotten very angry at the President and threw an empty pop can. They couldn't think of anything more. Like it was, just why would you ask that question, it's not supposed to be like that. We all live in harmony here.

Edwards's leadership style originated in the theoretical, specifically his graduate work in the area of organizational culture, although he admits that his graduate work "is a little out of date." Edwards indicated that he was broadly read and that his major influences, especially in organizational theory, included Terrance Deal and Peter Senge.

He focused on Deal and indicated that he "got to hear him for a day and that was when organization culture theories were new. That was quite an inspiration to me." Edwards concluded that his theoretical influences were "not so much one person, but rather a synthesis of many."

Creating a Shared Vision

College E, according to Edwards, undergoes a vision creating process "much like anybody else." However, he suggested that "we may be more comprehensive in how we involve people in the planning." Planning and creating a shared vision is undertaken in the context of a three-year business plan. He described the process as follows:

> we start with a management retreat, then a Board retreat, then another management retreat, and then we have retreats in every department and they make their own business plan which gets placed within the architecture of the bigger, broad-brush one. It gets rolled up and consolidated, and we do that almost year round. We have a quarterly review process and a mid-year review process in which we are taking our temperature to see if we are on track and how much of it we have gotten done. It becomes cyclical, once you are really into it. It touches pretty well everybody here, to some extent, at their department level.

To support the continued development and modification of the plan and vision, Edwards conducted "a minimum, four staff meetings a year" in conjunction with the information and ideas shared "electronically" with staff from other sites. An additional strategy that Edwards employed was "the question of the week." For this, he "tries to pick up on what people in the organization are asking about and then feed the answer out." This is done in conjunction with a "daily e-mail from me about something to do with the college."

Furthermore, throughout the process Edwards offered opportunities for input via "gatherings for people to come and have coffee or tea." Additional strategies include "myself and our other executive members going out to staff meetings; that happens fairly regularly. We also walk around the building, and eat in the staff lounge."

To assist consistency in messaging, Edwards utilized their communications department. They set up a database so "that our internal messaging reinforced those values and the things that are important to us about where the organizations is moving to." This is presented in "the architecture of eight simple messages that if you drill down there is more detail on our value of being learning centered." In addition, Edwards noted that messaging between the internal and external "requires congruency."

Edwards emphasized that vision development and implementation is not an individualistic responsibility. He indicated that

> as long as you're working in the value system and you don't do things which our organization would consider unethical or wrong, you have the freedom to build towards these goals in your own way with your own team. One of the requirements, however, is that you involve your team, you don't get to do it on your own.

He further supported his trust in the abilities of individuals by allowing them the freedom to move forward, when he noted that the organization's members are "the same people that lead our community organizations, our churches, our other important social initiatives; they've got leadership qualities, they have the capacity to make good decisions, and they think through problems."

With regard to inclusion, Edwards offered a caveat, one he learned from "the school of hard knocks." He shared this view: "people only want to make decisions about things

that affect them directly. They actually don't want to be consulted about everything that happens in the organization." Edwards also indicated that "they like information on what might be interesting to them, but they don't really want to get involved in every aspect of it." However, if there is an important or broader policy development opportunity "those that want leadership roles will come forward and say, 'I want to be part of that.'"

The decentralized decision making and "autonomy at the department level" has raised a series of challenges regarding the structure of the organization. Edwards described it as "running separate business entities." Part of the strategic planning and creating a shared vision, according to Edwards, included questioning: "What does this mean for the structure of decision-making? Who does what? How do we keep the communication up? And, how do we share what we know about our clients?" Admittedly, Edwards conceded that

> we haven't got it all figured out yet, we thought we had it figured out, and then we said, "Well that doesn't work." So we expect, and we've been quite explicit, that organizational structure and processes undergo continuous improvement and will change all the time.

Responsiveness to change, according to Edwards, is their "best core competence." Not only are they responsive in structural and information sharing methods but also in "adapting to a particular market need." Having gone from "no external customers to three hundred corporate clients in three years" is an example of their ability to "put programming together very quickly and adapt to a particular market need."

In terms of resistance to change in structures and programming, Edwards also indicated that "there was some resistance, but it gets expressed more as hurt feelings." In an effort to encourage individuals to embrace change he noted that "we dialogue all the

time with people. We ask, 'What is upsetting you?'" Additionally, Edwards identified that anxiety to change "doesn't come out in a really negative retrenchment kind of way." This is due, in part, to the fact that they "have had to offer packages several times in the last four years and therefore most people that would have been resisting change have chosen to go because they identified themselves as resisters."

In summary, Edwards indicated that continuing to create a shared vision requires "working" at those strategies described above, particularly "increasing the communication and spending more time listening to people." Eventually, Edwards declared, "they articulate what the real need is and you can get to solving the problems together."

Building Community

Edwards identified his primary role as "building external community." In reference to his secondary focus on the internal community, he suggested that the "strategies are basically the same whatever kind of community you're building." The essence of community building, according to Edwards,

> is about finding people who have a common interest and getting them focused on the issues surrounding the common interest. It is about getting them learning together about their different perspectives because every individual brings a different perspective into a dialogue. Having people talk about their issues, their aspirations, their vision of a better reality, and of spending time to get to where your at a common point. Then you've got a coalition for action.

To illustrate this, Edwards offered the following:

> I and the Chief Superintendent of the public system have been concerned about our youth and society being disconnected from youth. We have too

> many youth that are dropping out of education systems and therefore not learning. In X we have lots of problems with homelessness, abuse, and lots of social issues around youth, and youth not being valued enough in society. So we decided we wanted to bring the whole city of X together around this. We are now about to have all the leaders in our community sign onto a new form of structure to advocate for youth in our community, and I don't mean a deep structure and I don't mean superficial organizational structure. I'm talking about a role that we've taken in being a catalyst to get people from all over the community talking about the issues from different perspectives and then coming together.

Edwards also noted that he spent "about fifty percent of an eighty-hour week" building external community and that "building community is just plain hard work. Anything that you want to change and that will last takes a long time."

In follow-up to the case of the community X's concern for youth, Edwards noted that

> we had a group of twenty-two organizations that have been meeting monthly for three years to get to a point where we have a whole community catalyzed. I don't mean every individual but rather all the organizations that touch on you like the police, healthcare system, and the schools, with every agency coming to one point.

From this engagement perspective, Edwards pointed out that "one way you build community is to transmit values with storytelling." He further noted that "storytelling is also a way that organizational culture gets transmitted." Referencing the motto of College E, Edwards shared this story, one he often used with new staff:

> I had been here only a few months, and I got a phone call from a business client saying, "Hi, we are so and so, we are from out of town, and we heard you are responsive; we would like to have a program designed for us. I know it's Tuesday afternoon, but we would like you to build the lab in our community, out of town. We would like it staffed, and we would like the curriculum customized by Saturday this week. Could you do that?" and I said, "Well, I'll have to get back to you." I phoned the Dean and I thought, "I'm going to get laughed out of here" because I came from

> a place that wasn't very responsive or at least they thought they weren't—their time frame was two years. Well, they did it. They built a lab, they staffed it, they rewrote the curriculum in customized form, and had it running within two weeks.

With this illustration, Edwards also suggested that "College E doesn't work like a traditional college" and further identified that this type of responsiveness, in his view, "was very refreshing."

Furthermore, a positive outcome of inclusion in the strategic planning process, according to Edwards is that "participants get psychic income from being part of the process in setting the direction of the organization." Through the following illustration, Edwards described how "a lack of confidence can grow into organizational confidence."

> We first set organizational targets or goals, and then we work through them together. How are were going to get there? They said, "Oh, we could never do that. We'll never get our revenues up, we'll never get the FLEs to grow, we'll never get the satisfaction numbers and employment numbers." And then they did, and they said, "Oh, I guess we can do this; well, maybe we should move the bar a little higher." This was the evidence that it finally worked. It was a proud moment.

In continuing the discussion on the strategic planning process, Edwards noted, "it is really important to get the assumptions out first." In particular, Edwards indicated that "participants have assumptions about other people in the room that are not necessarily accurate, and they have assumptions about what the agenda, the goal, or the longer-term purpose is."

In making a similar point, Edwards observed that

> people try and isolate themselves into their group and say "We're different; we're special, and the rest of the organization is obviously not concerned about us and our aspirations." When in fact that isn't true.

Edwards identified "outside groups" as one source of how false assumptions are "sometimes" being formulated and attitudes "contaminated." For example:

> It happened with the Student's Association when they went to some event and came back saying, "Well, you are the enemy." And I said, "Well, where would you get that idea?" "People at College X say all management are the enemy." "We'll get past the stereotyping, have we been the enemy up until the time you went to the meeting?" "Well, no. We have been working together for the good of the college." "So, why am I all of a sudden the enemy?" That took a few meetings but "that's a good question, I guess maybe you are not the enemy." You know how people can get into the 'us versus them' thinking, and in some other organizations that exists.

College E was also not immune to the changes in government policies of the mid-to late 1990s. Edwards identified two challenges that affected the management and operations of the College.

First, Edwards noted that

> this College was set free from government at the worst possible time. We were set free with about one half of the money the school system had to do a comparable job, and only two-thirds of the next lowest funded College. We have the lowest funding of any public institution in Alberta: K-12 or post-secondary. We had an enormous fiscal challenge that wasn't true of other places, not even the northern colleges.
>
> We were set free with just over three thousand dollars a learner, and up in the north, it's usually closer to twenty thousand a learner, so you can imagine, money has been the big issue.

The fiscal pressures have, according to Edwards, "spurred College E into being more entrepreneurial." He further commented that "we had to change a lot quickly" and that generating "six million dollars in entrepreneurial revenue was a big accomplishment. One that we did together."

Second, the key performance indicators and accountability measures implemented by the government coupled with reduced funding meant that College E "had to grow without the resources to do it." Edwards elaborated that

> they said, "Now you have to live up to the college KPIs," which means you have to grow. You have to get the employment rates up—and we're supposed to serve the most disadvantaged Albertans—and you have to get them up to college standards and do all this overnight. Those were external pressures that were pretty hard to live with, but we did, and we achieved it.

Additionally, Edwards did express concern for the affect that government policies have had on quality:

> These policies did stimulate a positive change in behavior, and we got even more entrepreneurial. However, what worries me—remember when I said that how innovative and high quality the learning has been here, and this is not based on any evidence, just on gut feeling—is quality could get lost while you push in this other direction. What are we doing to encourage people to continue to be innovative and maintain quality?

Despite these challenges, Edwards and College E have had the most important measure of success: "they have survived." Edwards encapsulated his strategy for building internal and external communities that have led to this success when he concluded, "listen first, and create opportunities for people to hear each other in a real way. That would be most important."

Leadership Challenges

Edwards identified the force of change as the most important challenge he faced. He offered, "the scope of change is enormous, and it's hard to keep up at the top." Not only is change a leadership issue, change is a challenge for members of the organization

and the process of learning itself. Edwards further argued, "it's hard for the whole organization to keep up with the rate of change. That little scenario, well it's Tuesday and we'd like this by Friday—not quite that tight—is now getting to be the norm."

According to Edwards, being responsive is also coupled with changes in educational delivery, and in particular, the influence of changing technologies. Edwards argued that

> we are running e-learning courses, a few of them, but it's going to challenge us all. Nobody knows quite how you instruct e-learning. It doesn't feel comfortable. There are lots of things from skill sets to the appropriate use of technology with other learning methods, including the ones that are more high-touch. It's going to be an awkward transition.

He further identified that these challenges are difficult to meet without additional funding from government. He lamented on his "personal fatigue" and "frustration" with government:

> Governments are not investing in post-secondary education in the way that they should, and yet, it's so critical to have us moving ahead as a province, as a country. So we still have challenges ahead. You contrast that with an embarrassment of riches and it's kind of hard to understand why we can't get investment in post-secondary on the agenda.

Furthermore, Edwards argued that changing college missions and mandates are affecting his role and challenging the traditional views on college leadership. He noted that "leadership will get more external, more globally focused with more interaction between CEOs. I'm surprised at how much there is already compared to five years ago." In supporting his position on leadership change, Edwards provided the following personal example:

> Already in three, almost four, years I've seen a big change from when I first came. I had to put almost all my energy into a business process. We had zero business processes. Nobody had ever done the payroll here—that kind of business was done in Edmonton—so we are very internally focused on first creating the business infrastructure, then onto the decision-making structure, and then empowering people all at once. And so already the last two years have gotten quite externally focused, and my Board keeps pushing it that way. Five years from now we will be more internationally focused. I can see that happening. It will be externally focused. The CEO will be something the Board describes as your number one sales person for the organization; so go out there and sell at a very high level.

Edwards concluded that college leadership "now more than ever, is moving from education CEOs to corporate CEOs."

Summary

Anderson

College A was situated in a large center with ample opportunities for growth and community support. The college had one of the larger administrative teams in the system, was financially secure, and had strong enrollment demands for their programming. For Anderson, the primary challenge was to meet the increasing needs of the community by doing more, increasing access through directional change.

Anderson's primary focus was on predicting the future needs and directions of College A through environmental scanning. He described environmental scanning as examining the marketplace for trends, employment training needs and political inclinations using the community as a resource for input, reaction, ideas, and solutions. It also required consultation with other college leaders and government to hear their views and strategies to determine if they were suitable for his context. The answers then

directed Anderson towards the internal leadership. He argued that accountability and responsibility should lay within the organization to ensure that any new directions "link to the culture of the organization." He included internal leaders as agents to assist in the development of scenarios that determined direction. Internal leaders set specific goals relevant to their areas.

According to Anderson, implicit in this process were careful listening, questioning, and participatory decision making. Once the vision was established, Anderson's role was to communicate the vision repeatedly and persuasively to stakeholders. Anderson also indicated that the vision is elastic and continues to be revised in response to changing market needs.

Initially, Anderson described the external and internal communities as being very different, but then acknowledged that the processes for building them were much the same. He indicated that it was his responsibility to serve both, and that the basis of his servant leadership was honesty in communication and respectful engagement.

Building external community required that Anderson network, volunteer, build partnerships, fundraise, and inform the community about why College A is taking a certain direction. He also included partnering with other colleges as part of the larger community. Much of his leadership energy was spent on building external communities.

Success in building community, according to Anderson, was measured by the amount of financial support and service that community members provided the institution.

Anderson identified College A's most important challenge as increasing access and being responsive to market changes, and simply doing more. He also conveyed that

additional assistance from government will be required to meet the increasing demand for access.

Brown

Brown, recently new to his leadership role at this mid-sized college, described his leadership role as being focused on both internal and external communities simultaneously. According to Brown, there is only one community; therefore, leadership should not be internally focused.

Internally, he worked on creating an environment that allowed individuals to "aspire to greatness." In creating this environment, Brown included fostering internal leadership, promoting success, and developing leadership transparency. Transparency was achieved through engagement, exchange, easy access to information, and the empowerment of individuals. He noted that it was his responsibility to lead the process by example. This required a high level of visibility within the college. He further noted that a leader must believe in himself in order to have confidence to believe in others and that he continually tried to "drag" the organization forward, or "coax" its members to buy into and assist in creating a vision.

Furthermore, fostering internal leadership meant individuals were given the opportunity to take risks, make mistakes and learn from the experience. They are what Brown described as teachable moments. Delegation, accountability, and experiential learning were also key aspects of developing trust in the abilities of individuals and promoting successes in the community. Occasionally, it also meant defending the College in the community. Brown also employed the expertise of an external facilitator to begin

the processes of rediscovering the organizations vision, creating an environment, and changing the perceptions others had of the college and its administration.

Externally, Brown's energies were on engaging, networking, fundraising, and communication. Brown maintained a high level of visibility within the College and community by attending numerous events and engaging individuals and groups on a regular basis. College B had the additional challenge of meeting diverse educational needs with a limited-corporate-community base. To overcome this, his language was driven by what he referred to as "relentlessness". This relentlessness included a great deal of advocating for the college; defending its direction; and at times, defending its membership to the community in efforts to change the perceptions the community had of the college and consequently, the amount of support given increased substantially. This included collaborative efforts for generating additional resources.

The process for developing College B's vision was described as a multi-ring approach. Brown indicated that structural changes were made in accountability and reporting mechanisms systems, to allow decision-making to occur at their most appropriate level. Brown indicated that this "shifting of power" was ultimately about empowering the organization to move forward and that leadership was both a mix of "discovering a vision" and "creating one" through delegation.

Success in building community was measured by the amount of financial support the community provided in conjunction with the positive perceptions the community had about College B. The latter was measured in terms of increased community participation within the college.

Brown identified that research on leadership succession was needed. He took the position that changes in funding formulas have changed how Colleges operate, and therefore, colleges require different leadership profiles. Using himself as an example, he maintained that colleges need to look outside of the system for future Presidential leadership.

Campbell

According to Campbell, leading change in a multi-campus institution, one servicing the largest area of colleges examined, was a daunting task made difficult because of great distances between satellite campuses. Nevertheless, his approach for building community was to "bring each of the communities into the College and the College into each of the communities." Campbell also noted that the sheer size of the catchment area presented administrative challenges that required delegation: arguably, more than the other colleges examined.

He viewed his role as that of being a centralizing force; one that brought the organization's vision and direction into focus. He acknowledged that he simply couldn't provide leadership on his own and that delegation of authority and the dependence on internal leaders, coupled with a tolerance for a less-than-hierarchical system, was key to dealing with administrative challenges. Having trust in the abilities of others and empowering them to make decision was a necessitated by the complexity and size of his organizations service area.

In addition, Campbell's energies in recent years were spent on the amalgamation of two organizations and the introduction of College C's first Board of Governors. This was

important from the point view that government directives and initiatives could then be applied more equitably to his organization.

Furthermore, Campbell indicated that his leadership was driven by institutional values as opposed to management objectives. Unique to his communities was the added challenge of meeting the needs of a culturally-diverse clientele. Campbell's language, therefore, spoke to the need to embrace and have tolerance for diversity. Sharing of cultural histories were central to building community relationships. He argued that leadership in rural Alberta differed from that of inner-city leadership. It demanded working within an organization that was fragmented with no "true sense of the college as a whole." It also demanded that Campbell work toward meeting specific needs of individual communities that themselves had unique histories and workforce needs. For this he focused on the value of respect; respect for cultural diversity, respect for individuals, and respect for the needs of the various communities. Respect was demonstrated through inclusion of employees, students, advisory groups, and other stakeholders in vision creating and decision making. Campbell described this as primarily a bottom-up process.

In addition to inclusiveness, respect was shown in the representative college literature, symbolism in the college logo, and the participation of stakeholders at the many celebratory and information gathering functions within the college. These activities also provided Campbell and the senior management opportunities to articulate the values and communicate the College's direction. Messaging also included saying no to some ideas, yes to others, and explaining why.

Campbell identified three challenges that are at the forefront of his thinking. First, technology is changing the way they provide educational services. He did not specify the pressures this is having on College C. Second, he suggested that learning itself is changing and questioned what this will mean for education in the future. Third, meeting the needs of a large service area makes communication difficult, this coupled with implementing a new governance model and trying to develop an institutional aura, continues to be a challenge and occupies a great deal of his energies. Notably absent in his discussion was the mention of finding additional resources for programming.

Douglas

Influencing Douglas' leadership response was the fact that College D was, at that time, located in a rapidly expanding economic environment. This was combined with substantial fluctuations in enrollments over the past several years. Economic development affected the enrollments by providing numerous job opportunities for high school graduates. Douglas maintained that College D's central purpose is to serve the community and respond to community needs. Consequently, Douglas' leadership response was centered on the changing economic and employment climate

College D's response to meeting these challenges included building partnership via workforce preparation, the timely mounting of new programs for which they had the expertise, playing a coordinating or consulting role, or contracting out of services the institution could not provide. Douglas argued that success in high demand areas, and the resources they provided, in turn supported marginal programming and therefore offered

stability in the long term. The driving force for change was embedded in choice; to become more entrepreneurial and find additional resources, or fail as an organization.

Douglas described vision building at College D as a simultaneous bottom-up and top-down highly consultative process. Directional planning, according to Douglas, was about broad consultation and recognizing "similarities" in ideas.

He described governance as a "vocational" and "mentorship" model, one that encourages the development of individuals within the organization by providing opportunities with increased responsibilities, allowing individuals to grow while learning from their successes and failures. It also meant being inclusiveness in higher-level decision making. Douglas noted that delegation was necessitated as a means of being responsive to a boom economy. Building community was also about being seen engaging the community, and providing others in the organizations the opportunities to do the same.

Douglas viewed organizational success in terms of how the administration and organizational membership responded to the robust economy and changing employment needs that it paralleled. Measurements of success included increase in enrollments, the amount of financial support generated by the community, the engagement of college members in community events, and community members in the college.

According to Douglas, despite some initial reservations, College D's demonstrated successes in selling education and finding additional resources has had a positive effect on its membership. He noted the shift in organizational culture, one that now recognizes the need to be responsive to the community while making difficult decisions.

The leadership challenges that Douglas identified included institutional credibility, student retention, serving Aboriginal people, and maintaining and building relationships within the community and government. He acknowledged that these challenges are ongoing and further noted that College D will never have enough resources to meet all of the community needs.

Edwards

Edwards described his leadership role at College E in terms of creating an organizational culture that allowed individuals to gain "psychic income" while in turn, generating "organizational confidence." Edwards had to create a climate in which people were encouraged and motivated to be innovative. This meant changing the perceptions the membership had of administration and the organization, having a focus on learners, and finding new methodologies for teaching.

According to Edwards, this required a shift from a top-down to a bottom-up mode of decision making. Movement from what was previously an authoritarian process to one that was an inclusive process began with building a flat structure and moving outwards. Edwards identified internal leaders and provided them with opportunities to develop their leadership skills while "paying continual attention to their learning."

Creating a shared vision was very much a bottom-up, decentralized process; one that encouraged autonomy at the department level. Once individual teams created their own vision, they were incorporated into the architecture of the larger organizational vision, in particular, the three-year business plan.

Edwards indicated that building internal community was about passion, commitment, and taking care of the whole person. Edwards enveloped his response in values-based leadership coupled with sincerity for the needs of faculty, staff, and students. Edwards' leadership response was to engage the membership, seek solutions, and build on opportunities provided by the external community.

With regard to the external community Edwards noted that fiscal pressures forced College E to take a more entrepreneurial approach, one that required them to be flexible, responsive, and build partnerships with the community.

Central to Edwards' leadership response, was respect for cultural diversity and empathy. He stressed the need for his organization to be student-centered and be exemplary in student focus. The main vehicle for the realization of this value was communication. Edwards viewed his leadership role as "encouraging passion," "nurturing the individual," and the "heart" through a highly consultative, participatory, and team-oriented approach. Messaging took the form of relating organizational successes through storytelling in open forums, community events, and on the Internet. Communications also included questioning, careful listening, and exposing assumptions about the organization. He noted that there had to be consistency in the messaging. This was supported by an open access approach that allowed individuals to share information and question him directly regarding directions taken.

While Edwards talked a great deal about creating a culture of respect through communication and building a positive and responsive internal community, he did acknowledged that his primary concern was for the external, noting fiscal pressures required him to facilitate the building of partnerships, be responsive to community needs,

and take a more entrepreneurial approach to leadership. Edwards also argued that the strategies used to build the external community were basically the same as the internal—finding like-minded individuals and getting them focused on common issues.

Edwards measured College E's success in terms of enrollment growth, employability results, and the quick mounting of programs required to meet the needs of the community. He asserted that the latter was greatly dependent on the attitudes, abilities, and willingness of the membership. He suggested that their ability to respond quickly indicated that most of their staff embraced change.

Additionally, Edwards indicated a concern for educational quality, the challenges that force change—technology in particular—and the lack of increased resources from government to meet these challenges. And, in regards to future leadership, Edwards suggested that College Presidential leadership roles will become more like corporate CEOs: selling education externally and globally.

CHAPTER 6

Findings: Themes

Changes in government ideology have initiated system-wide renewal in the Alberta college sector. Colleges are now viewed as economic conduits for providing education based on community and business needs. Coupled with this view are growing pressures from government to reduce base funding while, at the same time, increasing the amount of external financial support so that colleges can maintain and build on their community missions.

As their portraits indicated, facilitating and managing change, in conjunction with the efforts of others, was viewed as the primary role of the college leaders studied. Moreover, the challenges that accompany change efforts differed depending on the context in which the participants performed their leadership roles. While all worked within the constraints required by government and made efforts to position their colleges in response to those directives, it was not surprising that they presented leadership strategies based on their specific organizational contexts, missions, cultural histories, and personal experiences.

Furthermore, the central motif in the leaders' language was embracing change. The leaders viewed change as a means of organizational renewal and survival necessitated by political and economic realities. These new realities created tension among stakeholders and therefore, it was the leaders' responsibility to employ adaptive strategies to release tensions.

Consequently, in their portraits, the leaders described how they embraced change, how they motivated others to do so, and identified key strategies they employed in their

leadership roles. Emerging from their stories, the leaders approached the subject of change through five specific themes. They are: a) speaking the organization, b) an enterprise orientation, c) political nuances, d) leadership transparency, and e) distributed leadership.

Speaking the Organization

The leaders viewed themselves as ambassadors and principal spokespersons for their institutions. They projected the values and visions of their organizations using positive, passionate, and persuasive language. Their language reflected a deep understanding of their organizational cultures and the symbols and rituals within. There was consistency in their language indicating that the messages had been repeatedly shared and reaffirmed.

The leaders discussed how they sought opportunities for messaging through engagement. They participated in formal (ceremonies, rituals, boards, and committees) and informal (volunteer groups, bag-lunch meetings, or walking the corridors) activities within their institutions and communities. The leaders argued that these engagements were opportunities to present the organizational view, raise the level of their institutions' visibility, and celebrate success. The leaders also suggested that these engagements provided additional opportunities for them to re-examine their institutions' goals, solicit feedback and input, discover and cultivate new goals, and bring meaning to the values their organizations and the leaders themselves held.

Metaphor was used to clarify and find ways to express their understandings of issues. For example, one leader equated building a vision to "launching a satellite—it

needs a lot of fire power" and framed his leadership purpose as "leaving the vineyard better than you found it". Another offered that leadership sometimes means being "in front of the parade, in the parade, or behind the parade" when it comes to participatory engagement. "Psychic income" was used by a leader to describe what individuals were gaining from their efforts in being innovative and responsive.

The search for clarity and understanding was further enhanced by the leaders through the use of questioning. Questioning was employed as a means of presenting their own assumptions and reaffirming organizational values and goals. For example, questions were used to formulate their organizational identities (Who are we, what are we and where are we going?); to address responsiveness issues (What are we seeing in the economy? What is happening in the job market?); to setting goals (How can we accomplish this?); to understanding the community (What can we offer them?); to accountability (What are you going to achieve?), or implications for outcomes (Who are affected by this?) and emotional inventory (How are you hurt by this?).

Last, the leaders' language was enveloped by a genuine excitement about their roles, their colleges, and the possibilities that lay ahead. They placed an emphasis on themselves as role models. The participants exhibited confidence in themselves, their ideals, and the values of their organizations. They argued that setting an example of openness and honesty in communication was crucial for developing trusting and meaningful relationships. The leaders articulated their passion and conviction for what they were doing and maintained that, with dedicated effort and the involvement of others, most challenges could be met. The leaders described their attempts to positively influence and shape their organizational cultures through action, example, and promotion of

organizational and personal successes. This was supported by and evident in their tireless energies, the amount of personal time they dedicated and sacrificed, and their high level of engagement within their communities.

Furthermore, I inferred from their testimonies that their engagement efforts led to positive changes in the perceptions that both the internal and external communities had about their organizations and administration.

An Enterprise Orientation

In response to the conflict and dilemmas created by different coalitions and groups, the leaders indicated that knowing their organizations' capabilities, their demographics and local economical trends, their communities, and the needs of their constituencies was key to developing institution-wide responsive strategies. The leaders viewed themselves as the primary internal and external access point for institutional and environmental information, they also acknowledged being the interpreters of data. They described how they found common ground between stakeholders, promoted new ideas and solutions, and acted as guides for implementation. The leaders described their connection to their communities, coupled with input from numerous stakeholder groups, as key to formulating their institution's focus and finding solutions that they thought would release tensions.

To ease tensions caused by decreasing government support, the leaders identified enterprise as the primary activity for tension resolution. They indicated that they were expected to access the external community, build partnerships, and respond to community needs in an effort to generate additional resources for operations while the

internal community was expected to respond to these pressures by accepting responsibility for implementing change. It was argued that being enterprising was a necessity for organizational survival. One leader indicated that choosing to be more entrepreneurial offered stability in the long term while another indicated that additional resources assisted in sustaining marginal programming. Others noted that fiscal pressures demanded they facilitate the building of partnerships, be responsive to community needs, and take a more enterprising view.

Furthermore, the leaders viewed enterprise as a win-win strategy. They believed the external community benefitted because the institution responded to their needs, and believed the internal community benefitted because the new-found resources aided in their financial and strategic planning. However, the leaders' strategies differed depending on environmental and economic conditions. Those in high-growth areas focused on responding to robust economic conditions and the parallel employment needs. Those in lower-growth areas focused on fundraising, advocacy, building alliances, and improving community relations. Most leaders responded to meeting market challenges through the timely mounting of new programs for which their institutions had the expertise. Some leaders indicated that they sought opportunities for which they could play a coordinating or consulting role, thereby enhancing access, whereas one leader noted that his institution contracted out program services they could not provide.

Political Nuances

In pursuing enterprise as a solution, the leaders described their attempts to change the way post-secondary education was viewed by the community. They noted that

political equity was gained by providing evidence of successful enterprises. Notably, the leaders focused on increased revenues from external groups, through fundraising and partnerships, and the mounting of new programs, which increased enrollments and generated additional revenues, as key measurements of success. Two of the leaders suggested that the number of community members visible within the college was also an indicator, another noted the emergence of internal leaders as a measurement. However, the level of these successes depended greatly on the demographics and the economic environment in which the institutions was located. The findings suggested that the larger the community, the larger the organization, the more opportunities for success as measured by additional revenues.

Moreover, the leaders identified political nuances as being part of the organizational landscape. They suggested that resolving political tension required balancing internal and external needs. According to the leaders, this balance required them to build coalitions and alliances with stakeholders and relay important messages including explanations of why certain directions were taken and others were not. To support this, the leaders demonstrated an enormous amount of knowledge about their organizations. They easily articulated financial and statistical data and referenced the perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes within their organizations and communities. The leaders suggested that resolving political tension also included motivating internal and external stakeholders to take ownership, assist in the discovery, and participate in the development of new strategic directions.

The leaders described their attempts to positively influence and shape their organizational cultures through action and example. From their narratives, I inferred that

the leaders identified themselves as being the central agent for creating an organizational climate that was responsive to community needs, although they considered everyone as being responsible. Interestingly, two leaders new to their organizations identified that they were required to change the negative perceptions that some membership had of administration.

Leadership Transparency

The leaders took steps to create an organizational environment that was conducive to change and enhanced leadership transparency. One leader began the cultural transformation with the assistance of an external facilitator. The facilitator initiated the process of finding common ground, creating a culture of thinking that encouraged engagement, exchange, and the empowerment of others. Another leader worked on restructuring his governance model to assist in aligning the organization with the changing needs of the local environment and the college system. All of the leaders worked toward moving from a top-down authoritarian decision making process to one that was described as either multi-ring or simultaneously top-down and bottom-up. They modified structures to improve information sharing and reporting, and placed decision making at their most appropriate levels. The leaders worked toward developing additional mechanisms (reporting and accountability) that were more fluid and complementary to their organizational cultures, while working within the boundaries of the collegial model. They did not indicate if the constraints of existing internal structures, policies, and procedures were major obstacles to modifying structures. While some leaders used existing forums, others developed additional structures and built on existing mechanisms.

Furthermore, central to the participants' leadership attitudes and beliefs of resolving tensions was the concept of openness. Openness, or transparency of leadership, as described by the leaders, was achieved through creating an organizational structure and culture that honored and respected the diverse needs of all constituent groups. The leaders considered relationship building and the motivating of others to participate in building a stronger organizational culture, as a primary means for assisting in change efforts.

Most leaders indicated that openness was further achieved through an increase in non-formal, ad-hoc forums. This suggests that the leaders were moving away from using only traditional forums to using a broader, more inclusive approach which further supported their leadership values of building of trust, respect and leadership transparency. These, the leaders noted, provided additional opportunities for messaging, questioning, probing, motivating, and inclusion in strategic-direction setting and decision-making processes.

Although the leaders described the strategic planning as a highly consultative and inclusive process, it was recognized that not all stakeholders necessarily wanted input. They indicated that the process generally began with the leadership establishing some focus or key strategic directions. For some leaders, this meant assessing external needs first, while others focused on internal matters. Those leaders focusing on the external indicated that networking and research, looking for trends, soliciting advice from partners and community stakeholders, and seeking opportunities was required. Those leaders focusing on the internal suggested that seeking input from the Board of Governors, executive committees, department chair committees, advancement or workforce development committees, faculty, staff, and students was a priority. Despite differences

in the initial stages of the process, the leaders converged on the subsequent stages, noting their role in finding common ground, adjusting the focus, and then furthering the debate and discussion by gathering additional feedback from various constituencies. Notably, the leaders expressed that the value of engagement and inclusiveness in various stages of the process was to facilitate "buy in" and further enhance quality decision making.

Furthermore, three of the participants indicated that vision building was a continuous process, one that required additional revisions and modifications. They described the process as a "discovery" or "journey" and indicated that future changes would occur in light of new information and/or in response to changes in the political or economic environments.

Distributed Leadership

The leaders indicated that they relied increasingly on the distribution of leadership responsibilities. They argued that they simply could not do it alone and that distribution was necessary because of size, distance, and/or the complexity of their challenges. Delegation of authority, or the "shifting of power," they suggested, contributed to the success of the individual and therefore, to the success of the college as a whole. Empowering individuals, promoting leadership development, and decentralizing authority and accountability were also viewed by the leaders as supporting the values of trust and respect while, at the same time, addressing concerns for leadership succession. Some leaders suggested that it was their role to not only delegate but to also be actively involved with individual development by providing observation and feedback. These leaders viewed delegation as a learning opportunity for both the designated and the

leader. Some leaders indicated that mentorship was a means of reducing risks associated with placing additional responsibilities on those who may, or may not have had the appropriate backgrounds.

Furthermore, since internal leaders were more involved with the managerial, or day-to-day operations of the organization, and acted as agents in the development of strategic direction, internal leaders, the leaders argued, contributed to making sure that any new directions were in alignment with the culture of the organization. Implicit in the leaders responses was the notion that internal leaders focused on the transactional aspects (implementing new initiatives) while they focused on transformational aspects. The leaders did not clearly reveal the extent of their transactional behaviour nor the extent to which internal leaders were seen as transformational leaders.

Additionally, delegation was a leadership response necessitated by changing community and organizational needs. Delegation afforded leaders the opportunity to place a greater emphasis on building relationships with the external community while at the same time nurturing internal leadership and supporting organizational values of trust, respect, and diversity.

Building Community

In addressing the community metaphor, the leaders viewed both the internal and external as a singular community. They preferred such references as "the college is the community and the community is the college" and suggested that fundamentally, the strategies for developing both were similar. However, they did acknowledge that the

external required much more of their attention and that they viewed the external community as a source for additional guidance and opportunities for renewal.

External attention was directed toward informing stakeholder groups about challenges, possibilities, and soliciting their responses and support. This was coupled with finding a balance between the colleges' internal needs and capabilities, and numerous external requests. Some leaders said that support from the external community was already there, while others had to actively develop relationships, in particular, those leaders new to their institutions.

Furthermore, the leaders spoke of building both the internal and external communities simultaneously. They focused on creating and improving the levels of trust and respect between the communities, while diminishing external perceptions of being distant or competitive. Some leaders elaborated on this indicating that the intent in building community was to bring the community into the college and to take the college into the community; to expose the institution's values and mission and find like-minded groups and individuals to assist and focus on common issues. The pragmatic agenda, however, was to secure additional donor support, generate new sources of revenue, and change the perceptions that the community had of public educational institutions.

In addition, two leaders indicated that they viewed other colleges as an important component of the external community. They suggested that by communicating with them they found out what they had done, what they were not doing, and what they were successful at. It also provided opportunities for partnerships, arguments for why their institution was not pursuing a particular programming direction, or rationale for the formulation of strategic directions that were independent of other organizations.

By and large, the leaders' primary activity of building community meant engagement; "being out there," being "seen," and being "heard." The leaders spoke of building community in terms of establishing relationships and "nurturing" those relationships. Building community was about engendering trust and respect, creating a shared vision, and an environment and inclusive organizational culture that raised the level of individuals' commitment, performance, and self-worth. Building community was about listening and communicating organizational strategic initiatives and outcomes through partnerships and fundraising. It was about resolving tensions by seeking and providing opportunities for their colleges. And above all, building community was about positioning their institutions for success in response to market needs and government policies.

Summary

This thematic review presented a way of looking at how the leadership role of president in the Alberta College system has changed, particularly, in light of the pressures associated with local economies, interests groups, and government accountability measures. Five specific themes, that relate to current leadership practice, were addressed.

As the organization's primary representative and agent for change, the leaders spoke for their organizations. They conveyed messages, communicated the organizations' goals and missions, and celebrated success at every opportunity. In their language they employed metaphor and questioning as a means of finding clarity and revealing their own assumptions. They spoke highly of their organizations and viewed themselves as role models responsible for setting an example of open and honest communication.

The leaders took an enterprise orientation in resolving tension created by decreasing government support. They described their connection to their communities as key to formulating their organizations' directions. The leaders assessed community needs, interpreted institutional and environmental data, responded to community needs, built partnerships, found enterprising opportunities, and generated additional sources of revenue.

The leaders argued that the external community was the driving force behind change and that being responsive to the community's needs was necessitated by changing government policies and a requisite for organizational survival.

Using persuasive communication and taking an enterprising stance, the leaders sought to change public perceptions of their organizations. They measured changing perceptions in terms of new enterprises, the mounting of new programs, increased community visibility and participation within the college, and the generation of additional resources.

Furthermore, resolving political tensions between stakeholders was identified. The leaders indicated that motivating internal and external stakeholders to participate in finding solutions and contributing to strategic planning was crucial for the resolution of tensions.

The leaders identified leadership transparency and creating an organizational environment that was conducive to change efforts, as key elements to their leadership approaches. They suggested that decentralizing power and authority, improving mechanisms for information sharing, modifying reporting and accountability structures, and the use of non-formal information sharing forums all contributed to leadership

transparency and creating a positive environment. Engagement and inclusion of both internal and external stakeholders in the strategic planning debate was viewed by the leaders as a means of enhancing and improving the decision making process.

While the presidents focused primarily on the external community, and in keeping with the value of trust and respect, it was necessary to decentralize authority through the distribution of leadership. Distribution was also necessitated by organizational size, distance and/or the complexity of challenges. By affording individuals opportunities to be leaders, the presidents placed more control for implementing change in the hands of second-level administrators and internal leaders. The leaders argued that the distribution of leadership placed accountability at the most appropriate level and that new directions could be more easily aligned to the culture of the organization at these levels. They also argued they simply could not deal of all the challenges alone, and that the shifting of power offered opportunities for individuals to learn and grow. Some leaders indicated that they viewed their role as that of mentor, were actively involved in providing guidance and feedback.

Last, the leaders embraced the building community metaphor as a backdrop to their leadership approaches. They also described working towards aligning the needs and expectations of the external community with the needs and capabilities of the internal community. They viewed both as a single construct and noted that the delineation between their organizations and their communities no longer existed; they were one community. The leaders spoke of building community in terms of increased visibility and communication. Consequently, they articulated the need for consistency in messaging and creating a positive organizational culture that supported tolerance, openness,

broadmindedness, and mutual trust. Building community was also equated with changing internal and external perceptions.

CHAPTER 7

Reflections and Recommendations

In this study I explored the beliefs and experiences of five College Presidents who embraced change and engaged in building community with others at a time when colleges were undergoing substantial and highly complex transformations, transformations that were a direct response to changes in government accountability measures and economic conditions.

The method for the study was qualitative inquiry based on an interpretivist orientation. The participants were selected based on peer recommendations. While the interviews provided the data, college documents were also examined to provide me with additional background information to increase my knowledge of the particular colleges. Steps were taken to ensure ethical procedures were followed, and pseudonyms were used to protect the identities of the leaders.

The findings were presented under four headings: leadership orientation, creating a shared vision, building community and future leadership challenges. I chose this format to highlight the leaders' contextual differences. These contexts ranged from inner-city to rural settings, high to moderate economic growth areas, and from single to multi-campus environments. Through multiple readings and reflections, I brought into focus five themes of speaking the organization, an enterprise orientation, political nuances, leadership transparency, and distributed leadership.

The significance of this study lies in its illumination of the adaptive strategies employed by presidents in response to changing societal conditions. The study also revealed that, although the leaders used management language in the literature, they took

different leadership approaches based on their organizational and demographic contexts.

I begin the reflection by drawing on the literature that supports what the leaders described as their adaptive strategies and the five themes already discussed. I close with some brief comments regarding future challenges and building community.

Reflections on Findings in Relation to the Literature

The leaders saw themselves as central change agents and utilized strategies that were in keeping with Anderson's (1993), Fullan's (1991, 2001a, & 2001b), Lewin's (1994), Milstein's (1993), and Nelson and Quick's (1994) theories on change. They publicly embraced the government's decision to renew the college sector through a new management orientation. The leaders studied their complex environments (Bolman & Deal, 1994) sought solutions, took reasonable risks (Pielstick, 1998), implemented new structures, in particular those new to their organizations (Hesselbein, 1998b), and measured successes (Bass, 1985 and Graen & Cashman, 1975). They recognized difficulties and sought to create an environment in which change could be managed more consistently (Egri & Herman, 2000).

The leaders used strategies that were in keeping with research on transformational leadership (Bass, 1994, 1995; Burns, 1978; Goodwin & Wofford, et al., 1998; and Grunstein-Amado, 1999). These included the multiple level activities of decentralizing authority, acting as a centralizing force for strategic direction planning, transforming organizational cultures, restructuring, realizing a vision (Bennis, 1993), mentoring (McFarlin , Crittenden & Ebbers, 1992), engaging communities, and finding a balance between competing claims for time and resources.

The leaders saw transactional behavior as largely a responsibility of other levels of management and the internal leadership. While they saw themselves as speaking for the organization, the presidents viewed transformation of the organizational culture as the responsibility of everyone. At the core of the transformation theme was open and honest communication with respect for the diverse needs of individuals, cultures, and communities.

Speaking the Organization

The leaders described developing a shared sense of ownership and responsibility through their "speaking the organization", in effect, creating a sense of the organization through their words. They used persuasive language that was enveloped in metaphor, story telling, and questioning (Morgan, 1986; Smith, 1996; and Wheatly, 1999). They spoke of how they created shared values and visions (Ackerman, 1996; Bennis, 1993; Pielstick, 1998; Raun & Leithwood, 1992; and Sergiovanni, 1992, 1994a, 1994b) and that consistent and repeated communication was required (Pielstick, 1998 and Yammarino & Bass, 1990). They described how they engaged groups and individuals, built relationships (Hasselbein, 1999 and Royal & Rossi, 1997) and argued that these were in an effort to foster respect for diversity, encourage open communication, and embrace authenticity in working together (Ackerman, 1996; Etziono, 1988; Sergiovanni, 1996; and Strike, Haller, & Soltis, 1998).

These college leaders, even those relatively new to their positions, exhibited extensive knowledge of their colleges and communities. The leaders expressed trust in themselves and the abilities of others (Ackerman, 1996; Fiedler, 1996; and Kozner &

Posner, 1996). They articulated their confidence and belief in the values of their colleges and the benefits of post-secondary education. In keeping with these, these presidents understood the importance of, and therefore spoke of engaging in rituals, ceremonies, story telling, and other forms of social engagements (Bolman & Deal, 1994).

An Enterprise Orientation

The leaders described scanning their environments, predicting the future, making interpretations, and taking risks as a means for initiating change (Avalio & Bass, 1988; Thorns & Greenberger, 1995; and Hesselbein, 1999). The leaders indicated that in order to release the tensions created by reduced funding formulas and accountability measures, they were required to view their colleges as enterprises, and, in so doing, they suggested, their community's perceptions about post-secondary education would change. In keeping with this, Ramsden (1998) argued that enterprising leadership "avoids the shadowy consequences of academic isolationism and excessive specialization which have unquestionably contributed to public perceptions of the declining worth of higher education" (p. 264).

Furthermore, the leaders argued that having an enterprise orientation was a necessity for building on previous organizational successes and ultimately survival. This orientation was the leaders' response to government's rationale of choice driven by economic reality.

Political Nuances

The leaders identified conflict among different interest groups and indicated that although much of their energies were spent on the external community, they sought to find a balance between external needs and internal capabilities (van Vught, 1995). As advocates and negotiators (Bolman and Deal, 1994), the leaders engaged in networking, partnering, and building coalitions within their communities (Bailey & Averianova, 1998, and Dougherty & Bakia, 1999). The leaders chose strategies based on their contexts; those situated within strong economic growth attempted to respond to increased community needs, while those in lower economic growth areas focused on improving relationship within their communities (Lorenzo, 2001 and Harrison, 2002).

Leadership Transparency

The leaders spoke of leadership transparency, equal access to information, open and honest communication, respect for individual differences, and embraced Strike, Haller, and Soltis' (1988) notion of benefit maximization. They sought to reculture their organizations, moving from an authoritarian model to a participatory decision-making one (Fullan 2001a, 2001b; Mittelstet & de los Santos, 1997). They used technology as a means of publicly presenting institutional data and, in addition to formal settings, they chose non-formal forums to communicate decisions and solicit additional feedback. Most importantly, they saw themselves as being responsible for articulating reasons why certain decisions were made while at the same time, sharing organizational challenges and opportunities.

Distributed Leadership

The leaders described placing authority and accountability at their most appropriate levels coupled with finding ways to make the organization more efficient. They also described moving away from a hierarchical model and developing new structures that were more fluid with a broader distribution of power (Bolman & Deal, 1994). They valued social exchange and delegation, believed they respected internal leaders as learners and saw themselves as mentors in others' learning (Ackerman, 1996; Grunstein-Amado, 1999; Senge, 1996; Smith, 1996; Royal & Rossi, 1997). The leaders spoke of their respect for the needs and feelings of individuals and the importance of building relationships through empowerment (Bolman & Deal, 1994).

One reason for their sustained emphasis on leadership development was that, for many, leadership succession was a concern, particularly in light of a more business enterprise than educational institution orientation. This concern was supported in the studies of Shults (2001) and Vaughn and Wiesman (1998) who addressed the impending leadership crisis in the college sector.

Building Community

Finally, the leaders embraced the community metaphor as a means of framing and communicating their leadership experiences (Sergiovanni, 1994a, 1994b, 1996). In summary, I draw upon Pinchot's (1996) work that appropriately synthesizes the leaders' responses and literature in this study:

> Leaders create an environment in which leaders can emerge. They contribute inspiring descriptions of shared vision to align everyone's energies. They care for and protect their employees. They listen and do

> their best to accept the contributions and divergent ideas of employees as honest attempts to help. They give thanks for the gifts of ideas, courage, and self-appointed leadership that employees bring to the community. They discourage backbiting and politics. They do their best to treat each member of the organization as a spiritual equal worthy of respect. They share information so that everyone can see how the whole organization works and how it is doing. They publicly celebrate the community's successes. . . . Community is a phenomenon that occurs most easily when free people with some sense of equal worth join together voluntarily for a common enterprise. (pp. 27-28)

The comments of these leaders reflected the findings of much of the generic management literature. These participants were well aware of the popular literature on management and had adopted much of its language in describing their work. This is not to say that these statements were mere rhetoric; rather they had adopted a language that reflected their own realities and which linked them to their colleagues. What they were less aware of was the extent to which their new public management orientation was not only part of their lexicon, but was also part of their beliefs. One example was the stress on an enterprise rather than an educational orientation. Only one president provided a critical commentary on this perspective, commenting on his own discomfort with having to bridge these two orientations.

Responding to the Research Questions

The primary question that was explored was broad and open-ended: What are the experiences and perceptions of post-secondary leaders who embrace change and engage in building community with others? More particularly, I sought responses to the following questions:

1. What is the process for actualizing an organization's vision? Does a vision undergo a metamorphosis over time? If so, how are new ideas incorporated into the process? Who are silent in the process?

Through this study, I learned that organizational visioning is an ongoing process of discovery, a journey without a firm beginning or end point. These presidents entered college environments that had existing vision or mission statements. They adopted different strategies in moving into a vision building process. Some restructured, others broadened their consultative opportunities, all indicated moving away from an authoritarian mode of governance. One president sought external assistance to ensure that his personal biases did not overly influence the process further demonstrating integrity and transparency in the process.

The process generally began with the presidents scanning their environments and setting direction. The process then continued through various groups adding input and then returning to the senior level. These presidents also indicated that not everyone wanted to provide input and therefore, removed themselves from the process through abstention. Once the process was finished the vision itself remained open. These leaders described how they articulated and reaffirmed the vision often, further seeking endorsement and testing its relevance. They described how new ideas were inserted and subject to the same evaluation process—open discussion and debated among constituencies.

2. How is "building community" defined by leaders? What is the role of the president in building a sense of community?

Building community was a metaphor adopted by the participants as a way of framing all their work. They referred to community as including both the college and the surrounding geographic communities. They used terms such as the internal and external community to differentiate between these groups but viewed both as one large community.

The presidents described building both the internal and external communities as their principal role. They indicated that the strategies they used were essentially the same for both and that community was about engagement and demonstrating respect for the diverse needs of many constituent groups. What surfaced from their descriptions was the idea that each individual has a valuable contribution to make and that personal success was equated with institutional success.

3. What does the relationship between leadership and followership look like? How does one identify and encourage internal leadership?

The relationship between the president and the designated internal leader was described by the presidents as one of mutual trust and respect. Some authority and control was relinquished and internal leaders were provided opportunities to learn, grow, and be accountable for their actions. The presidents viewed themselves as mentors in the development of internal leaders. They also acknowledged that this required them to watch closely what was happening to ensure that major mistakes were not being made.

The presidents indicated they identified internal leaders through observation and engagement. They also suggested that many identified themselves as leaders through expression of ideas and actions. Foremost, the presidents articulated the importance of

being role models, setting effective leadership examples, and motivating internal leaders. These, they argued, began by exhibiting confidence in and respect for the abilities of others.

4. How does one bridge the gap between those that embrace change and those that fear it?

In addressing this question, these presidents chose to frame their responses on the positive side of the issue moving around the question by focusing on the success of various individuals, the presidents' role as leadership mentors, and their strategy of engagement. They preferred to share anecdotes about those who embraced change and why they did so. However, two presidents did return to the initial question and addressed it directly. One indicated that those vehemently opposed to change were given exit packages, while the other employed a strategy of marginalizing such individuals, preferring to engage those who accepted change. These presidents also indicated that these were rare situations and that most individuals embraced, or at the very least, accepted change as occupational reality.

5. What experiences have been successful and which ones have been disappointments? Are there strategies, processes, actions, and situations which might increase the frequency of success? Is there a best response scenario or are the challenges within so unique as to exclude any common measure? Is there a combination of processes that lead to more effective results? If so, how are these processes articulated and sustained?

Although they used similar language and described only their successes, the different ways presidents approached their work suggests that personality and context played major roles in any delineation of leadership. All set a vision but they used differing approaches to do so. All worked with their local communities but while some spoke about meeting businesses' needs in a timely fashion, others spoke about community development, working with community members to develop economic strategies that would include what the college had to offer in addition to educational services. Most importantly, the strategy they spoke of predominately was communication—the need to tell their institutions' stories, share challenges and success, and engage in respectful listening.

6. What internal and external factors affect the process?

The internal factors that affected the process included organization size, existing structures, institutional histories, perceptions of individuals, and fiscal realities. After these presidents addressed these matters and once things were working relatively smoothly, they left the internal working to their vice presidents and placed a strong emphasis on their external work. Two newly appointed presidents indicated that, although they worked mostly on external matters, many internal challenges remained and that they needed to listen carefully, watch, and pay close attention to events unfolding internally.

The external factors that affected the process were community size, economic activity, the size of the catchment area, and the number of stakeholder groups. All of the presidents indicated that the majority of their time, energies, and work was focused on the

external. They suggested that in order to meet the many challenges their organizations faced, they would need the assistance, guidance, and support of their external communities, hence their commitment to and emphasis on developing external relationships.

Furthermore, while the study revealed responses that support much of what was said in the management literature, it also uncovered insights into presidential leadership in the Alberta college sector. The study revealed that presidential leadership in the Alberta college system had changed. Leaders saw themselves as being expected to focus their energies on the external community through networking, building partnerships, fundraising, finding opportunities for new programming, and generating additional sources of revenue. College presidential leadership had moved from primarily educational leadership to one of environmental-response leadership. Coupled with this is the notion of finding a balance between the competing interests of internal and external communities and that presidents were now seen as the frontline sellers of education. However, beneath the surface of this balance lay the notion that liberal arts education had been reconfigured as job training. The questions that come into view are: Should the business community be the sole beneficiary of this shift? What are the returns to the college? How does the community as a whole benefit beyond purely the employability factor? And, should monetary gain be the only measurement of success?

The leaders also revealed that context can be a deciding factor for measuring entrepreneurial success. Colleges from urban or high-economic growth environments showed more results in generating additional sources of revenue than colleges in rural or smaller centres. Isolated colleges were at a disadvantage in meeting government

directives because the opportunities were simply not there. This raises the questions: What is the government perception of the less-than successful organizations? Should colleges be judged accountable using system-wide rules or should each college have accountability and responsiveness measures that are realistic and relevant to their contexts?

The study also revealed that leaders new to their organizations had a more complex and difficult task. They had to facilitate psychological shifts in their organizational cultures. They had to work more diligently on both the internal and external fronts to change negative perceptions and attitudes individuals had about their organization and its administration. The new leaders had to bring about more structural changes and implement them quickly. Those leaders who had longer tenures already had solid structures in place and therefore, could work at redesigning them in a more timely manner while focusing on the external. This difference in the level of expectations of the president suggests that leaders may be reluctant to take on a presidency in a new organization because of the extreme pressures and demands associated with shifting an organization's culture, values, and visions.

In keeping with these changes, the participants raised their concerns about future leadership. On the one hand, leaders argued that there was a leadership crises and that looking outside the system would be a consideration and, on the other hand, they supported, nurtured, and relied on internal delegation. Are internal academic leaders not suitable for continuing leadership roles in an enterprise model? Are the second- and third-level administrators terminal leadership experiences? Can internal leaders not learn and acquire the skills necessary for presidential leadership? Does finding leaders from outside

the system increase the focus on enterprise and diminish the importance of educational leadership?

While all of the participants had been exposed to both scholarly and populist literature on leadership, they preferred to speak about the latter. Two of the leaders contended that the academic literature failed to describe leadership in their unique settings. One participant indicated a lack of credibility towards academic writers because many of them had never led an organization, and that some of their writings were too "mechanistic and recipe" oriented. Another participant argued that leadership research should be focused on "what leaders are doing" and not on what researchers "think they should be doing." Generally, the leaders preferred to offer examples from their populist bookshelf that included management literature specific to the private sector. This populist orientation is understandable considering the shifting emphasis towards colleges as enterprises.

The participants also noted that their leadership style was greatly influenced by their developmental experiences such as communicating with and/or observing other effective leaders, visiting institutions for ideas, and observation of effective leaders or professional development opportunities, and a synthesis of these. The participants also noted their lack of personal time to engage in sustained reading. One participant indicated that he relied greatly on his "own instincts" while another acknowledged his private-sector leadership experience as being "highly influential."

Last, the leaders also questioned the role of government. They indicated that technological advancements, requests that exceeded resources, and meeting the needs of students with diverse cultural and educational backgrounds have put pressures on the

system. As one leader noted, “we need help from the government for some funding, both capital and operating,” while another argued that “with an embarrassment of riches, it’s hard to understand why we can’t get investment in post-secondary education on the agenda.” One leader was sensitive to political inclinations and saw it as his responsibility to respond to the research and directions suggested by government. If there was a recognized demand for programming, then his role was to facilitate new, or enhance existing programming, and find the necessary resources to respond to meet the challenge. One leader simply viewed the role of government as a virtual “non-player” while another argued that government policies “allowed us to become something quite different than what we were.” In contrast, one leader shared his “frustration” and “fatigue” with the decreasing amount of government support.

Redefining Community Colleges

In addition to providing descriptions of the practices of current presidential leaders, the data also revealed that the definition of community colleges has changed. It has changed from two perspectives. First, colleges have embraced the importance of workforce development and employment training in direct response to economic conditions; thus changing their colleges’ educational missions. Second, colleges have embraced the importance of partnering and developing external relationships to secure financial support and moral support. Colleges are now seen as enterprises and by inference, college presidential leadership has changed. Inherent in these changes is the notion that their organizational cultures have made the transition from being non-receptive and isolationist to a culture more accepting of new ideas and changing values.

The college as enterprise is being led and supported by the leaders in this study.

Implications for Practice

In a study such as this, it is what we can learn from the experiences of leaders that adds value to the study. Therefore, I offer the following synthesis of some key ideas that may provide guidance to practitioners:

As public representatives and leaders of educational institutions in a time of conflicting demands, college presidents ought to be aware of their behaviour, how they present themselves as leaders, and reflect on who they are as persons. Leaders need to be consistent in their messaging. Leadership transparency is essential, hence the importance of distributed leadership and open access to information. College leaders are required to interpret data and be cognizant of their organizational cultures and communities. They are expected to research, seek advice, study, and learn. It is essential that leaders build coalitions, partnerships, and advocate for their organizations. Leaders ought to have confidence in working with and through others. They mentor and set leadership examples. Leaders are required to illustrate understanding of their economic environments, be aware of uncertainties within, and be cautious not to overreact or over extend their organizations in response to changes in their environments. Leaders ought to be mindful of about how community development and the building of small responsive units work with, or against, existing staffing agreements. And, it is essential that leaders have a strong understanding of the collective as a whole and the role post-secondary education plays within their community.

Reflections on the Research Process

Foremost, this study is about what was learned from the leaders regarding the creative activity of college leadership in challenging and uncertain times. I began with the unforeseen. The study has become what the leaders and I have brought to it. I encountered many challenges and walked in blindness at times. I also take delight in how the study has changed me and my thinking, and what the experience has afforded me.

Throughout the data analysis, I found myself mentally recreating the snapshots of the interviews, re-examining leaders' language, and reflecting on what the leaders chose not to say. I found myself trying to read their silences. I thought about them as humans working in a very challenging role and recognized that they were simply trying to do the best job they could under difficult circumstances. I thought about the mistakes they must have made, their successes, and envisioned the journeys they took to reach their goals. I found myself thinking about whose leadership style I admired the most and resolving this with the many aspects of each of the participants' styles I enjoyed. I was impressed by component leadership characteristics in each of them and found myself envisioning those characteristics I admired, challenging myself to incorporate them into my own person. I also reflected on the demanding nature of the work and the leadership attributes required in these challenging and uncertain times. I wondered how they changed as persons and as leaders. I questioned whether the senior leadership required in the college system was all that attractive by asking myself, "What have these leaders sacrificed?"

Without a doubt, the participants were excited about sharing their experiences. They had energy and style in their communication. This was supported in their positive language. Negativism was virtually non-existent. They gave the impression, through their

stories, that this was an opportunity to re-examine their successes and re-affirm their own abilities; they were effective and quality leaders. I sensed that the participants shared previously given orations. In other words, they were sharing their institutional and leadership messages—their rhetoric. This suggests that they were protecting their organizations and themselves and hence, presented their biases towards their organizations and of themselves. At the same time, I wondered about their ability for self-reflexivity, for critically examining where they were leading their organizations and why.

I was also drawn to the leadership mantras the participants revealed. They shared their stories and explanations using language that clearly, was often used in other situations; they were well rehearsed. They spoke highly of their organizations and took pride in their own abilities as leaders. However, they were the participants' explanations and not the explanations of those affected by the leaders. Therefore, the question remains: How do others perceive their leadership and how successful were they in the eyes of the internal and external stakeholders?

In the interviews, the leaders did not reveal how they dealt with difficult decisions such as layoffs, redundancies, and terminal career paths for staff and so I contemplated on the many ethical issues that surround leadership.

With regards to the leaders' focus on generic leadership and management literature, I wondered why the leaders were less interested in the scholarly research, considering that much of what they were saying was in fact supported by research. Part of their reason may be that they were merely looking for ideas to stimulate their thinking.

Furthermore, although the leaders were influenced by different leadership writings and styles and, despite the fact that their leadership roles were contextually different, they

had commonalities. In an effort to highlight this point further, I draw from the political field in which Havel (1991) subscribed to similar beliefs to Pinchot:

> I can try to create around me, in the world of so-called high politics, a positive climate, a climate of generosity, tolerance, openness, broadmindedness, and a kind of elementary companionship and mutual trust. In this sphere I am far from being the decisive factor. But I can have a psychological influence. (p . 9)

In addition, I sought a broader understanding of the themes, a non-prescriptive, all-encompassing concept, and found that what the leaders were saying and manifesting through action was, as Havel suggested, psychological influence. They were attempting to change how the internal and external communities viewed themselves and each other, and thereby, shifting the notion of community colleges as isolated organisms. Colleges were now viewed as an organism within a larger ecosystem; an organism that is dependent on environmental conditions for survival.

With this metaphor in mind, I recap Sergiovanni's (1994a) notion of formal communities, ones in which "relationships are constructed for us by others and become codified into a system of hierarchies, roles, and role expectations" (p. 4). However, formal communities can be "transformed into a collective 'we;' thus, providing [individuals] with a unique and enduring sense of identity, belonging, and place" (p. xiii). It is the "we" that the leaders in the study sought to create. We can meet the challenges, we can be innovative, we can be responsive, and we can be more enterprising, or consequently, we "all" fail.

In summary, I subscribe to Fullan's (2002) notion that leadership *is* rocket science (p. 31) and that leadership is about the aforementioned mindsets and finding

congruencies with the situational realities of an organization—its culture, its challenges, its place within the community, its stage in development and that leadership can be learned through opportunities, education, and reflection.

Recommendations for Further Study

This study is about raising more questions to forward the research, discussion, and debate on leadership behavior. For this, I embrace Vidich and Bensman's (1968) conclusion that "at best, [the researcher] can feel that he has advanced his problem along an infinite path. . . there is no final accumulation and no final solution" (Peshkin, 1993, p. 28).

With this in mind, I am drawn to the many questions and concerns that this study raises for me as a researcher and educator. For example: While the notion of colleges as enterprises has released some tension, has it also not created new ones? How has contracting out, part-time instruction, and time-limited programming affected the sustaining sense of the college as an institution serving the community? Have the colleges been over reactive in changing the focus to vocational training? Are private interests now the primary force for change and has liberal education been undermined by these interests? Should monetary gain be the primary measure of success? Can colleges maintain their commitment to technological advancement in support of private sector needs in light of its high costs? In response to these questions, I offer the following recommendations:

The implications of this study suggest that more research that examines the perceptions and attitudes of faculty and staff regarding the notion of colleges as

enterprises is required. Further to this, and in light of changing college missions, is the notion that other tensions may exist, and therefore a study on the implications of changing educational missions on collective bargaining is warranted.

Since leadership succession was a major concern, it would be appropriate to examine what leadership attributes are required to deal with shifting college mandates. In keeping with this, research on how future leadership may be developed would provide guidance on which to build a leadership succession plan so that the crises could be averted. The study should include examining both private- and public- sector organizations in an effort to disclose similarities and differences in leadership.

While this study revealed how presidential leadership has changed, a study that examines how second- and third-level leadership has changed would be of great value. The study could also examine internal leadership development and further enhance the debate on leadership succession.

A study that addresses the role of the private sector is needed. Examining the influences that the private sector has on college governance and the role of higher education would provide insights on how colleges react to environmental conditions. The study might shed light on the increasing role of the private sector and whether this leads to the privatization of college programs. It may reveal any tensions that might exist between the traditional role of liberal education and vocational training.

And, in keeping with the notion of movement away from a liberal arts education to vocational training, a study that examines the long term implications for making such a shift is needed. The study could reveal what is being lost, what is being gained, and what societal consequences there may be in making this shift.

Finally, considering this study revealed how college leadership has changed, it did not reveal or examine in-depth of how organizations have changed. A longitudinal study is needed that goes beyond the descriptive and explanatory, one that examines the actions and outcomes of the adaptive strategies implemented by college presidents.

Conclusion

In this study I constructed portraits of college leaders from their words. The leaders talked about their lives and organizational worlds, their challenges, and the adaptive strategies they employed. From their discussions, the notion of college presidents as business leaders surfaced. The leaders' language was colored with an emphasis on enterprise while the importance of education dissolved into the backdrop. Private sector interests dominated their agendas in responding to the change in government ideology. Consequently, they preferred populist literature and the notion of private sector leadership surfaced in addressing leadership succession concerns.

In addition, although government accountability measures were applied system-wide, the leaders adaptive responses differed depending on their organizational contexts. The urban colleges had the advantage of larger stakeholder groups to assist with efforts in responding to these measures, while the rural and multi-campus colleges, although measured by the same criterion, were disadvantaged because of their communities' size or economic activity. Nevertheless, the leaders focused on the strengths found within their own communities while endeavoring to meet the challenges put forward by government.

In précis, the study showed that presidential leadership in the Alberta college

system and college missions and mandates have changed, and by implication, public perceptions about community college education must be changing also.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I

Letter of Consent

(Date)

(Address)

Re: Consent to participate in a study entitled

BUILDING COMMUNITY: Senior College Administrators' Perspectives

Dear (Participant):

During our recent conversation you gave preliminary agreement to participate in the above study which I am completing as part of the requirements for a doctorate in Educational Administration and Leadership at the University of Alberta. I am now requesting that you acknowledge your consent in written form. Please sign both copies of this letter and keep one for your record.

The study contains no deception and its focus is as described on the attached cover page. As a participant in this study you will be asked to engage in two to three separate interviews. They will be scheduled at times and locations that are mutually convenient. The initial interview will take approximately one and a half hours while subsequent interviews will require approximately one hour of your time. These interviews will be electronically recorded.

Confidentiality will be respected. I will take necessary precautions to ensure that your identity and that of the organization are not inadvertently disclosed. You maintain the right to withdraw your consent any time during the study without researcher prejudice. Also, you have the right to exercise censure over any data that may be sensitive to your personal or professional life. Transcripts of the interviews will be provided so that you can check their accuracy and decide if you wish to exercise your right of censure. Following the study you will be provided with a copy of the results of the study.

I thank you in advance for generously agreeing to consider participating in this study. I am looking forward to meeting you and learning more about you and your experiences. I hope that you will find your participation an enjoyable and rewarding one.

Sincerely,

Rolf J. Boon

I, ____________________________ consent to participate in the study *BUILDING COMMUNITY: Senior College Administrators' Perspectives* and I acknowledge that my permission is subject to the terms and conditions described above.

Signed: _________________________ Date: _________________________

Encl. Cover Story

Appendix II

Cover Story

The purpose of this cover story is to present the topic, clarify the study and answer any questions or concerns about the process. We will then determine if we are suited to work together on the study.

My name is Rolf Boon and I am the Chairperson of the Fine Arts Department at Grande Prairie Regional College. I am also a student in the Department of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Alberta conducting research for a doctoral dissertation entitled *BUILDING COMMUNITY: Senior College Administrators' Perspectives.*

I plan to interview senior academic officers at colleges in Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario. The purpose of the study is to explore the phenomenon of building community at a time when the focus of administration is on rationality and accountability. The study proposes to engage, capture and examine the creative moments of five senior academic officers at post-secondary institutions. The purpose is to share what the participants have learned and what we can learn from them about the phenomenon. Furthermore, the study is a means of adjusting the lens through which we view leadership, administrative, and organizational behavior, particularly when organizations are undergoing substantial and highly complex transformations. Specifically, to explore the experiences and perceptions of post-secondary leaders who embrace change and engage in building community with others.

I have chosen this subject because of its relevancy to me as an administrator and because I believe it to be of great value to research on leadership. Furthermore, it is my hope that the results of this study will change the way in which organizational behavior, leadership and membership is understood and practiced.

The results will be presented in an unpublished doctoral dissertation. Secondary use of the research may include: articles, conference presentations, and/or electronic media (i.e. CD ROM, website or electronic journals). These additional forums will allow me to develop a larger audience for further discussion, debate and research.

All of the participants have been chosen because of their experience, intimate knowledge of the subject being explored and because they are the most appropriate persons for this study. They were identified from data collected from existing surveys, contact with Government agencies, peer recommendation and/or other networking and purposeful sampling methods. The participants' identities and those of the organization for which they are employed will remain confidential. In the methodology and research design I have incorporated strategies to ensure that confidentiality and anonymity will be of outmost importance and that deception will not be used. The study has been reviewed and approved by the Faculties of Education and Extension Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. My commitment to the participants is that I will engage in an ethical and respectful process.

Each participant will be asked to engage in two to three separate interviews. They will be scheduled at times and locations that are mutually convenient. The initial interview will take approximately one and a half hours while subsequent interviews will require approximately one hour of your time. The participants will be provided sample interview questions and the interviews will be electronically recorded. I also request that participants provide documentation that they deem relevant to our discussions.

Furthermore, my role is not to judge but rather explore and gain understanding. There are no right or wrong answers. Your experience is important to me and the success of the study. The primary benefit to the participant is that of open and honest dialogue about a subject they have intimate knowledge about and may otherwise not have a forum in which to share their ideas. The risk to the participant is that questions may elicit some measure of discomfort when discussing difficult issues. The participant maintains the right of refusal to enter discussion of issues that they are uncomfortable with. They may also withdraw at any time without researcher prejudice.

Most importantly, it is my hope that participation will provide a positive learning experience that will benefit both the researcher, participants and ultimately, the readers of the study.

Appendix III

Letter of Understanding

(for support persons)

(Date)

(Address)

Re: Respect for Confidentiality

Dear (support member):

Thank you for agreeing to act as (transcriber, editor and/or proof reader) in my study entitled *BUILDING COMMUNITY: Senior College Administrators' Perspectives.* This research will contain material that the participants and I expect to remain confidential. Your disclosure would put both us and the participants in a difficult position. Your acknowledgement, and respect for confidentiality is therefore required. Please sign both copies of this letter and keep one on file for your record.

Should a conflict of interest arise or if you have any questions or concerns about

I thank you in advance for generously agreeing to assist me with this study. I am looking forward to working with you and I hope that you will find your contribution to be a valuable learning and rewarding experience.

Sincerely,

Rolf Boon

I, ____________________________ acknowledge that the work I do for the study involves confidential material and that I am committed to not discussing or disclosing any information about the participants or the study with others.

Also, I promise to return all materials and disks and not retain any information on my hard drive on the completion of my work.

Signed: ________________________ Date: ________________________